Come Hungry

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Come Hungry

by HigherMagic

Summary

There are two wolves guarding the entrance, and they look at Will with sharp eyes as he strides past them, towards the check-in station. He tells the receptionist – human, he notes, marking both the pale blue veins in her neck and then how her posture immediately stiffens, pulling her hair forward to hide it – that he's here to see Jack Crawford, and is told to sign in and wait for his visitor's badge, and an escort.

He does as he's told, because even though his eyes are the clear, natural blue of a well-fed vampire, his kind are notorious for acting unpredictably, and he can feel the eyes of the guards and the blinking cameras, listens to them whir as whoever controls them undoubtedly let their sights linger on him and keep him monitored while he waits.

Notes

part two will be explicit.
my dear friend val wanted a world where werewolves were the fancy ones and vampires were the unkempt messes and, well, I can never pass up a good werewolf/vampire fic :D

Chapter 1

Will is not in a good mood. Of course, he rarely is in a good mood when he has to be out during particularly sunny days, but his afternoon has been an unwelcome change of pace and only threatens to get worse.

He sits in his car, glaring through the tinted windows towards the jutting, foreboding grey spear of Quantico. The parking garage casts his car into shadow, and given that it's the afternoon, he knows it will only grow longer. Acknowledging this, Will forgoes his sunglasses and his cap, shrugs off the coat he wears to protect his arms and neck from the sun, and leaves his scarf in the car. His kind will not disintegrate on contact with sunlight, they've long since evolved past that, but he burns very quickly and it can take a long time for him to heal.

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He resists the urge to bare his teeth, straightens and then slouches against the wall and entertains himself idly tracing the patterns of plaid lines in his shirt. Jack Crawford is a wolf, most people in power are, and Will's lip twitches as he recalls the man's scent, his compulsive need to reach for Will, to touch him and scent mark him. It's natural for wolves, might even be welcome to their kind, but Will is not a wolf, and so he can only read it for what it is – a gesture of dominance, something to remind Will of his place in the world, and his place in the room whenever Jack is involved.

It's not the first time their paths have crossed, but it's the first time Jack directly asked for his help, and didn't just send an envoy or speak a little too loudly around Will, hoping to garner his interest. Will is a quick study of the world, and even though he's not a wolf, Jack's behavior as a leader reeks of someone trying to bring a stray into the fold.

Will can sympathize. Somewhat. It would work out, more or less, in his favor, to be under the protection of someone like Jack, to have Jack vouch for him – but that implies Will needs to be vouched for. His ability to step into the minds of killers puts people ill at ease, but he's damn good at his job, and he doesn't need any help.

He looks up, as a slim woman approaches him. She has long black hair and a kind-looking smile, and wears a white lab coat. "Graham?" she asks, and Will nods, standing. She's human,

he can smell the richness of her blood as she walks towards him, and holds out her hand in greeting. "Beverly Katz, I work in forensic analysis. This way."

Will blinks at her, surprised by her lack of fear as they shake hands. She even turns her back on him – how strange. Even with the guards and cameras, she's close enough that Will could do a supreme amount of damage before they could stop him. And it's not like he can be killed, even by wolves. She doesn't smell of fear, just of formaldehyde and plastic and the specifically dusty scent of dormant air conditioning kicking into high gear.

Wolves run hot, and the days have been unbearably humid recently.

He follows her past the check in station, surrendering his bag and phone and taking them back once they're scanned. One of the wolves, a little female, makes a show of checking his bag and Will mentally rolls his eyes.

"I'm clean," he mutters. She eyes him, sharp, a brow raised, and hands his bag back.

"Just doing my job, sir," she replies archly.

Will huffs, shoulders his bag, and follows Beverly up the stairs to the main offices. The scents of wolves and humans assault him, make him feel bristly, his mouth dry. He hasn't been around this many people, all penned in like sheep, in a long time. His lecture hall is one of the largest, both because his classes are some of the most popular, and because the University board insisted that he maintain his distance from his students, in case he has a 'Bad Day'.

Always so tactful, but it's the kind of thing that warrants capital letters. Vampires on a Bad Day seldom see a new one as free citizens.

Beverly leads him to a closed door, half of it made of frosted glass, with the words 'Agent J. Crawford' held in a little sleeve on the side of the door. She knocks, and Will hears a terse 'Come in', in Jack's familiar voice, and she opens the door.

He freezes at the threshold, almost choking on the scent.

Wolf.

But not just a normal wolf scent – his eyes snap, immediately, to the figure of a man sitting on the visitor side of Jack's desk. He's dressed in a light suit, an ugly cream-brown thing that hurts Will's eyes to look at, the collar of his white shirt open to show his neck. His hair, a sleek matt of bronze and ash, slicked back on his head, and he turns and smiles at Will, giving Will a view of his dark eyes, his eye cheekbones, his off-angle teeth.

Will resists the urge to bare his own in answer.

Will sucks in a breath through his mouth, and enters, shrugging the strap of his bag from his shoulder. "Sorry I'm late," he says, and doesn't add, petulantly, that he arrived right on time but was held up downstairs. Beverly nods to Jack and closes the door behind her. "Traffic," he says instead, and takes a seat.

"That's alright," Jack replies. He was probably told the second Will drove in past the gate leading to the parking lot. "Will, this is Doctor Hannibal Lecter. Hannibal, this is Will Graham."

"A pleasure," Hannibal purrs, though he doesn't offer his hand. Will's fingers curl, and he wets his lips, forces himself to meet the wolf's eyes but can only manage for a moment. This wolf smells unlike anything Will has sensed before – a deep, smoky scent that makes him think of woodfires, of whiskey and moonlight. Something almost wild, but wolves aren't wild, not anymore.

Will nods to him, holding his bag tight to his lap, and settles in his seat. Tries not to make it look like he's hiding his neck, though if he's being honest, two directions pull him in equal measure – the urge to hide away, to hiss and spit and put his back to the corner; and to pull at his collar and show this wolf more of it. Doctor Lecter is older, powerful; the kind of wolf that made the world what it is today.

Jack clears his throat, gaining their attention, and it feels like the loss of gravity when Hannibal stops staring at him. "I was just catching Hannibal up on the case," he says, and holds a manila folder out to Will. He takes it, spreading it on his knees, and opens it, eyeing the list of missing persons. "As I explained to you before – all these girls have been reported missing in the last thirteen months. All disappeared over the weekend, so we can assume they were missing up to seventy-two hours before being reported."

Will frowns. "Nothing's turned up?" he asks.

Jack shakes his head. "No bodies, nothing that comes out of bodies," he confirms. "We've opened up an anonymous tip line but everything we've gotten so far has proven less than useful."

Will hums, and beside him, Hannibal rises. Will stiffens, but Hannibal moves past him, towards a large cork board. Will follows him, gaze alighting on the map of the U.S., bordered with the same photos in the file, with red string tying each victim to the last known location.

He watches as Hannibal slides his hands into his pockets, his suit jacket spreading tight over his broad shoulders. "No details?"

"Nothing until this morning, then they all had details," Jack confirms. He sighs, and rubs a hand over his mouth, grabs a pen and points to one of the pictures. "Some idiot in the Duluth P.D. took a photo of Elise Nichols' body, and Freddie Lounds posted the story on *TattleCrime*."

Will huffs, and glares down at the file. "Tasteless."

"Do you have a problem with taste?"

Will's fingers curl, and he grinds his molars together. "My thoughts are often not tasty," he says sharply.

"Nor mine," Hannibal replies, and Will looks up to see him smiling at Will. "No effective barriers."

Will lowers his gaze, and wishes he had something to drink. He doesn't need water, or traditional food to survive, but there's something to be said for the numbing burn of whiskey. "I build forts," he says, and flips one of the photos over so he doesn't have to stare at the wolf.

"Associations come quickly," he says.

"So do forts," Will replies.

He can feel Hannibal's smile, as he takes his seat. There's a cup of water on the desk in front of his place, which he takes, and drinks. Will's nostrils flare, smelling the sugar additive in it – of course, the full moon is coming soon. The wolves will be stockpiling calories like bears do in preparation for winter.

There is a pause, and Jack rises, approaching the board with a sigh. Will stares resolutely down at the file, and stiffens when he hears Hannibal say; "Not a fan of eye contact, are you?"

Will slaps the folder closed, and tosses it on Jack's desk, noting with a sharp stab of pride that it sends his pens scattering, and one rolls onto the floor. It might be childish, but wolves are so uptight and close-knit, he likes it when he can ruffle their feathers and raise their hackles a little.

"Eyes are distracting," he says tightly. "You see too much, or you don't see enough." He turns his head, meets Hannibal's gaze. "And it's hard to focus when you're thinking 'Wow, those whites are really white', or 'He must have hepatitis', or 'Oh, is that a burst vein'?"

Hannibal smiles at him. "You don't need eye contact to sense that, surely," he purrs, and sets his cup down. "I thought your kind's ability to enthrall and deduce stems from eye contact." Will glares at him. He sits so assured, not at all afraid of Will or worried about riling him up. It's oddly refreshing, being around something confident enough not to be wary of him.

But the implication makes Will's upper lip twitch. He rubs his hand over his mouth – Jack, he thinks, would not react well to seeing Will affected.

"Well, I try to avoid eyes whenever possible," he says sharply, and can hear Hannibal's soft huff, the little purr trilling at the back of his throat. The sound of it makes him shiver – he's never earned a wolf's purr before. "Jack?" he says, seeking for a distraction.

Jack returns, and sits.

"I imagine what you see and learn touches everything else in your mind," Hannibal continues. Will presses his lips together, eyes him from the corners. Fights the urge to let out a warning snarl of his own. "Your values and decency are present, yet shocked at your associations, appalled at your dreams."

Will's brow furrows. "I'm surprised," he says tightly. "I wasn't aware people like you thought people like me had any 'decency'."

Hannibal's expression is somber, his dark eyes focused. His head tilts, and Will's eyes drop, unbidden, to the flex of tendons in his throat. Hannibal must see it, for he smiles. "You must remember, Will, to leave room in your skull for the things you love."

Will's eyes snap up to his, and this time he doesn't swallow back his snarl. "Whose profile are you working on?" he demands. Hannibal's eyes flash, his lips twitch in a smile that lights up his eyes more than anything else, and Will looks to Jack. "Whose profile is he working on?" he snaps to the other wolf.

Jack sighs. "Will, you must understand – I can't just let vampires into the field, on cases. The stress -."

"I'm sorry, Will," Hannibal says, straightening, his brows lifted in a way that smooths out his expression, placid and removed as a statue. "Observation is what we do. I can't shut mine off any more than you could shut yours off."

Will's upper lip curls back. "Please," he scoffs, and sits forward to meet Hannibal's eyes as he takes another drink of water. "Don't imply that you're just as 'uncontrolled' as I am." Hannibal looks at him, and Will smiles, wide enough to show all his teeth, the points of his overdeveloped fangs. Even for a vampire, his are larger than most. "You wolves pride yourselves on your *control*."

"Will," Jack says, sharp with warning.

"*Don't* psychoanalyze me," Will says, and he shouldn't threaten Jack, absolutely not, in a building full of wolves just waiting for an excuse to arrest him and keep him in holding until he 'calms down'. He stands, and though neither Jack nor Hannibal stiffen, he can feel the tension in the air like slick rain. "You wouldn't like me when I'm psychoanalyzed."

"Will you help?" Jack asks.

Will pauses, and shoulders his bag with a huff. "Of course," he snaps. "I want to put this mutt behind bars."

Jack's nostrils flare at the slur, but Hannibal smiles, and lifts his chin. "You believe it's a wolf who is abducting these girls?" he asks, and sounds more delighted by Will's outburst than anything else.

Will glares at him, rolls his shoulders, presses his lips together, and looks to the board. "Abducting isn't that far from pack initiation," he says curtly. "And," he adds with a meaningful look to Jack, "vampires have no use for *bodies*." He smiles sharply. "Consuming the kill is your pathology, not mine."

Hannibal hums. "You're so certain they're dead."

Will looks at him. He nods. "What would you do, if someone you wanted in your pack betrayed you, or denied you?"

Hannibal smiles, in that same way that only brightens his eyes. Will's gut clenches at the sound of his purr, so soft he's not even sure Jack hears it. His fingers curl, and twitch at his sides. He's thirsty, suddenly – he didn't have time for lunch, and now his mouth is dry, aching for refreshment.

"Thank you, Will – I'll be in touch."

Will snaps his teeth together, huffing, but he knows when he's being dismissed. He leaves the office, pulling his messenger bag strap higher on his shoulder, and rolls his eyes inwardly as, immediately, he's joined by a wolf escort that walks behind him on his way to the stairs.

"Hey, Graham!"

He halts, breathing in the scent of Beverly, as she approaches him. She's holding a black plastic bag with a straw sticking out, and Will's nostrils flare, smelling blood. He tenses, and takes a small step back as she approaches him.

She smiles at him, and hands it over. "Swiped it from the lab downstairs. Don't worry – I screened her, she's clean, and we still have enough left for any additional testing. I didn't know what kind you liked, but she's AB positive."

Will frowns down at the bag, and takes it on autopilot. "I…" He doesn't know what to say.

"You guys need to eat, like, what, every twelve hours or something?" she asks, and leans in closer, gesturing to her own eyes. "You're going a little red. Thought you could use a snack."

Will doesn't have enough blood in him to blush – he won't, until he eats – but a fresh wave of cold aggravation and sheepish gratitude wash over him all at once. "Thank you," he says, because that at least is genuine; he wasn't looking forward to the thought of such a long drive home without anything to eat, and there are no restaurants that cater to vampires between here and home.

She smiles, and nudges the bottom of the bag. "Drink," she coaxes. "I'll walk you out."

Will nods, sipping at the straw, sighing heavily at the taste of blood as he returns his visitor's badge and walks with Beverly out to the parking lot. There's a small strip of sunlight on the sidewalk, and he holds his bag above his head, wincing when his knuckles ache sharply, and lowers it once they're back in the shade.

By the time they reach his car – also under watch, he notes, and is glad he didn't park in the garage because he's sure someone would have made a scene to see him walking alone with an unarmed human – the bag is empty. He pushes the straw in and crushes it in his grip, throwing it into the nearby can for medical waste.

"Thanks again," he says, standing awkwardly by the driver-side door.

She nods, folding her arms across her chest, and blows a strand of hair from her face. "I'm familiar with how people feel after a meeting with Jack," she says, giving him a knowing grin. "Thought you could use the pick-me-up."

"I hope you don't get in trouble," Will replies.

"Eh, I run the place down there. What are they gonna do, fire me for feeding a feral vamp?" She lifts her shoulder in a shrug, but sobers when Will flinches, looking down. "Sorry; that was a shitty joke."

"It's fine," Will says, and runs a hand through his hair. He licks, absently, over his burned knuckles, the blood pooling in his empty stomach and helping him heal his mild burn. She watches him do it, and he shifts his weight awkwardly again, wiping his hand on his shirt. "And I appreciate the gesture, really – I was getting kind of hungry."

She doesn't react to that implication, except to sigh, and nod. "What did Jack want with you?"

Will arches a brow.

"Come on! It's not every day we get a vampire in Quantico – and your reputation kind of precedes you." Of course it does. Will sighs.

"I'm helping him with a case," he says, and before he can search for some excuse to leave, he becomes aware of another scent, and stiffens in recognition.

Wolf.

"Will!"

Will turns, narrowing his eyes as he spots Hannibal striding swiftly towards them. In the brief flash of sunlight, his eyes shine almost golden, his tanned skin and perfectly-groomed person suit brightened for it, and it doesn't fade as the shade takes him. Will's eyes burn.

Beverly clears her throat. "I should go. Nice meeting you, Will! Don't be a stranger."

Will can only nod, mutely, as Beverly leaves, and Hannibal takes her place. The scent of him is really overpowering – not unpleasant, but certainly not ignorable either. If Will could put a scent on the concept of 'power', he thinks it would be a lot like that. Hannibal is probably a lot older than he looks.

"Will," he says again, smiling warmly. "I'm glad I caught you. I wanted to apologize for my behavior."

Will blinks at him, and leans back against his car, hoping to put some distance between his teeth and Hannibal's neck. He just drank, he's not hungry, but his mouth is still *so* dry. He folds his arms across his chest and tilts his head.

"So apologize," he challenges. Seeking, maybe, some crack in Hannibal's control, some proof that Hannibal *can* be offended, and that Will is justified for showing his teeth so often. The way the world is, challenging a powerful wolf like him isn't without consequences – if the

wolf itself doesn't lash out, he has the favor of the law and society behind him. Will has nothing but his stubborn pride and his teeth.

Hannibal, though, merely smiles at him, and ducks his head in a demure nod. "I am deeply sorry for causing any offense," he says. Will blinks, and sucks in a breath, fingers flexing against his biceps. "And I'd like to invite you to dinner tonight, to atone for my actions."

Will blinks, brows rising. *That* is unexpected. And he really shouldn't accept it – if Jack holds to his word, Hannibal will become Will's *caretaker*, if not his outright escort, and the thought of a wolf babysitting him while he helps on a case he barely cared about in the first place is bad enough. They shouldn't even attempt any greater connection than that.

But the prospect of seeing Hannibal's home, of catching the wolf when he has no one to perform for, of getting even a whiff of his true nature, is an enticing one.

He lifts his chin. "I like my meat rare," he says.

Hannibal smiles at him, wide enough to tease Will with another glimpse of his teeth. Will can easily imagine him as a wolf – black, Will thinks, and big. With a muzzle that could kill in a single snap. He shivers, shoulders tensing, as Hannibal's eyes drop to his neck.

"Excellent," he purrs, and reaches into his jacket pocket, pulling out a card. On it is his name, his phone number, and his home address, and Will wants to ask what kind of wolf just has cards with his address on it to hand out to any- and everyone, but he resists. Wolves like Hannibal don't think they have anything to fear. "I'll see you at seven. Come hungry."

Then, he turns away. Will watches him as he goes, swallowing, eyes lingering on his broad shoulders, his long legs, the way he moves – animal, for sure, but more feline than anything else. Suddenly, it doesn't feel like he's eaten all day.

The fact of the matter is that Will knows a vampire's bad reputation isn't entirely unfounded. They are creatures of the night, a slave to their unquenchable thirst, and quite literally dead inside. Sure, well-fed and powerful ones can pretend. When he's freshly fed, he can blush and his heart can race, he can grow warm given the right stimulus, but when vampires and werewolves were still mostly a badly-kept secret, human propaganda painted them as monsters; as insatiable demons that want nothing more than to suck the life out of you and leave you for dead.

The wolves piled onto that, and it became too late to change it. Pack mentality is a killer. And there are more wolves than vampires in populated areas, since wolves have the advantage and privilege of breeding and carrying the dominant gene, so even half breeds can inherit it. Making a new vampire is far more tedious and requires much more focused intention – and it's punishable by eternal life in prison, nowadays.

Despite the bad rep, it's true that it *can* be difficult to maintain decorum around so many beating hearts. Wolves only change once a month, and there are facilities and medications to keep them docile or out of public reach, but vampires have nothing of the sort, because they're always hungry.

Always.

Will tries to avoid human blood, as much as he can. He's too sensitive to humans in general, and can usually taste the sickness in them, the age, the fear if they happened to die violently. The overdoses of drugs and medication even after being filtered. Blood doesn't age like whiskey or wine or cheese – it doesn't get better the older someone is.

So, instead, he has his pack. They always taste fairly good, because he feeds them well and takes care of them and makes sure they never come to harm. Dog blood is thicker than human blood, and without any filtering it's the equivalent of drinking milk straight from a cow instead of the watery crap humans get from the store. He has enough dogs to keep them in rotation, so they don't grow weak or sick, and he's well-fed and protected with them for company.

Being a vampire is an implicitly lonely existence, but with his dogs, Will is relatively content. He thinks Hannibal would find his pack's existence endlessly amusing.

He arrives at Hannibal's house at ten to seven, and waits in his car, eyeing the setting sun with distaste as he counts down the minutes. At two minutes shy, he puts his sunglasses and cap on, pulled low over his face, and wraps his scarf around his nose and mouth, exiting the car. He has a bottle of wine in his gloved hands, because he's not entirely without manners.

He ducks his head and hurries to the front door, glad that there's a little cover from his home, and knocks. He busies the moments until Hannibal answers with removing his scarf, gloves, hat, and glasses, pocketing each in turn, and then Hannibal opens the door. He's dressed the same as that afternoon, though he's not wearing his jacket anymore; just a plain, soft grey sweater vest that highlights the thickness of his chest and stomach.

Will presses his lips together, and holds the bottle out without a word.

"Didn't know what kind you liked," he says. "Or if it'll even go, but I was told it pairs well with beef."

"It will suit wonderfully," Hannibal says kindly, setting the bottle down and helping Will shed his coat. Will shakes his shoulders out, runs his hands through his hair, and follows Hannibal to a large, dimly-lit dining room. Despite himself, he smiles, pleased at Hannibal's conscientiousness, keeping the lights low and the curtains drawn.

"Please, have a seat," Hannibal says, and gestures to a place setting at the left side of the table. Will goes, and Hannibal disappears for a moment, leaving him to peruse the dining room. There are antlers mounted on the wall that Will assumes are from Hannibal's hunts over the moons, framing a rather graphic painting of a woman having sex with a swan. His brows rise, and he huffs to himself.

Hannibal returns with two wine glasses, and hands Will his. He sets his down and leaves again, and returns with an explosion of scents – two plates with a large cut of meat on each, seared and dripping with pink juice, a dollop of a dark red glaze atop them. Will's plate holds only that, but Hannibal's has steamed asparagus and buttery-light whipped potatoes on the side.

Will takes his fork, poking at the glaze, and lifts it to his nose to smell. He frowns. "Is there blood in this?" he asks.

Hannibal smiles at him. "Fresh from this morning," he replies. "I hope you like O negative."

Will stares at him, and clears his throat, his cheeks stinging with pins and needles as he almost-blushes. "It's my favorite," he admits softly.

"I'm glad," Hannibal says with another fond smile. He takes his knife and fork in hand, and Will does the same, slicing through the black crust of the meat to reveal the innards, which are cool and such a deep red it's almost purple.

He takes a bite, and freezes. Chews, and swallows. "This…isn't beef," he says slowly.

Hannibal hums, and drinks his wine. "No," he says. "It's not."

"Deer?" Will hazards.

Hannibal shakes his head. "Ah," he says, when Will simply continues to stare. "Perhaps you're not aware – wolves of a certain esteem are allowed to section off a hunting ground during the full moon. Criminals who are already facing the death penalty are released, and we hunt them for sport."

Will sucks in a breath, and looks down at the meat. *Human*.

He swallows again, his fangs aching at the taste of human on his tongue. It's good – terribly, wonderfully good. He takes another bite before he can stop himself. Then; "You said this was fresh."

Hannibal nods, smiling.

"The last full moon was three weeks ago."

Hannibal meets his eyes, and Will feels another sharp shiver run down his spine. He sets his knife and fork down and pets over his neck, mouth watering because he wants to keep eating. He's suddenly so *hungry*.

"You knew I'd be able to tell."

Hannibal smiles, looking for all the world like they're merely discussing the weather. "As you've no-doubt noticed, Will, I am a solitary member of my species. I find the rest of my kind and their obsession with forming packs tiresome, for I rarely come across someone who sees things the way I do, and have no desire to teach that vision of the world to someone who is not predisposed to seeing it."

Will nods, absently. He can empathize. Probably better than most.

"Jack informed me he intends to move forward with hiring you as a consultant, and that my part will be to monitor your mental and physical health." Will's eyes snap to his, at that. "I understand our relative positions of power, and so I thought I would make an attempt to show you that I do not intend to coerce or trick you."

"Openness and honesty, is that it?" Will rasps.

"Exactly." Hannibal's eyes, despite the darkness, shine with pleasure.

"So you're going to force me to keep your secret," Will says, and he's not even sure it is a secret – Hannibal could have permission to hunt outside the moon, he's sure it exists for wolves, because wolves rule the world and can get away with anything. "To what end?"

"I'm not going to force you to do anything, Will," Hannibal says gently. "But I would take it as a great personal victory if you, in response to my transparency, yield some of your own. Who knows?" he adds, and turns his attention back to his meal. "We might even become friendly."

"Friendly?" Will echoes.

Hannibal nods, and meets his eyes again. "You do a good job of keeping in line," he says, and Will's upper lip twitches. He grabs his knife and fork and savagely slices off another bite of meat so that he doesn't snap at Hannibal. "I don't believe you will suddenly go mad and attack an innocent bystander, but if you *do*…"

Will freezes.

"Well, I suppose I want you to know that you can trust me. You can come to me, if those dark thoughts we discussed threaten to swallow you whole."

Will shivers, his knife scraping across the plate with a sharp screech. He sets them down with an apologetic wince, and takes a long drink of wine. Because Hannibal can't possibly be offering what Will thinks he's offering.

But -. "You'd give me your neck?"

Hannibal's smile is wide and warm, his eyes dark with satisfaction. "If it came down to that."

"Why?" Will demands, and shakes his head. "You don't know me from Cain."

Hannibal laughs, his lashes dipping low. "Because I've been around for a very long time, Will, and I know a kindred spirit when I smell one."

Will is blushing now, he's sure. "You smelled me?"

"Difficult to avoid," Hannibal replies coolly. He sips his wine, and sighs softly. Will takes another bite of meat – by God, it's delicious. Hannibal knows exactly how to cater to his tastes, it seems. Thoughts curl around his head, unbidden, of watching Hannibal hunt –

perhaps of joining him, draining the blood while Hannibal feasts on the organs. He's positive that Hannibal wants him to think that; can read it, prowling in the wolf's eyes.

He can't think of anything to say, and so they don't speak again, for a long while, until the plates are cleared and the glasses refilled. Will drains his, and despite the meal, his stomach still clenches sharply with hunger when Hannibal smiles at him.

"Would you like to retire to the study?" he asks.

Will shakes his head, standing. "I should be getting home," he replies. "But…thank you. For everything."

"It's my pleasure, Will," Hannibal says, walking him to the door. He helps Will with his coat, hands flattening broad and wide over Will's shoulders as he pets away a stray piece of dog hair. The sun has set, so Will doesn't need to put on any other protective clothing, and he shivers at the touch, suddenly feeling cold. It's no secret that wolves run hot, and Will's fingers curl, wanting to feel it for himself.

Hannibal smiles at him, and gently touches his fingertips to Will's scruffy jaw. Will swallows harshly, and fights the urge to show his neck like wolves do. "Please feel free to call me if you need anything," Hannibal says, in a purr soft with promise. "I always keep my pantry well-stocked."

Will doesn't know what to say to that either, so he merely nods dumbly, and leaves. He can feel Hannibal's eyes burning into him the entire way to his car.

Garrett Jacob Hobbs is a werewolf, with a human mate. His daughter is human, and, driven by a desire to see his pack grow, he had been abducting young wolf girls and trying to get them to join his pack, killing them and consuming them when they refused.

Will absorbs all of this, as he lunges at Hobbs and bites through his neck savagely, his mouth flooding with blood. Hobbs' thoughts slam into him through the blood-connection, and he moans, gripping him fiercely as he bites down and lets fresh blood pour down his throat. He's shaking, borderline feral, and snarls and tears at the wolf, drinking from him raggedly as Hobbs howls and shrieks and claws at him, shredding his shirt. Will snarls again, fits his fingers around Hobbs' wrists and pins them down, straddling his stomach, and bites until he feels bone between his teeth. Bites again, panting harshly, as the wolf trembles and goes limp.

He can hear Hobbs' daughter, Abigail, gurgling behind him, and he pulls from the wolf with another low growl, prowling over to her. She's spurting blood from her neck, and Will's jaws part, his fangs aching to drink more. He's hungry, so *hungry*, and she smells wonderful, sweet and scared.

He presses one hand to her collarbone, the other to her jaw, tilts her head and leans down -.

"No, Will."

Will snarls, fever and hunger burning him from the inside, but then there's a hand in his hair, twisting tightly, and another hand fits over Abigail's neck, gripping strong and assured. Will whines, snapping his teeth, and leans down to bite at the knuckles separating him from his kill.

A weight presses over his back, and he trembles when he feels teeth at his ear. "Let go," Hannibal demands, and Will obeys without quite knowing why, groaning and trembling as Hannibal grips Abigail's throat. She's staring up at them, the light dimming from her eyes.

Then the medics run in, and all Hell breaks loose.

"Get that fucking leech away from her!" one demands, and Will raises his head, snarling, but Hannibal stands and drags him back, away from his kill – *his kill* – and lets the paramedics take over. He registers, absently, a gun being cocked, and growls, lunging for the police officer aiming at him.

Hannibal growls, and puts himself between him and the gun, holding Will tight by the throat, other hand still in his hair. "I can handle it!" he calls, his voice unwavering, his eyes bright. Will snarls at him, clawing at his red hands, and Hannibal shows his own teeth in answer, herding Will out of the kitchen, through the back door.

Will flinches, but Hannibal doesn't push him into the sunlight. Rather, gathers him under his coat and forces Will to the ground, a hand still tight around his neck as he pushes Will's teeth against his own throat. Will growls at him, licking over his pulse, and Hannibal works the saddle of his thumb between Will's fangs as he bites down, shedding more blood but saving his own neck.

He blinks, brow furrowing, not expecting the taste he receives – his head is flooded with anticipation for that sweet, human girl, and the sudden taste of wolf startles him, momentarily, out of his reverie. He shudders, curling up against Hannibal's side, tonguing at his wet palm as Hannibal pets through his hair, purring in a way Will imagines is soothing to wolves.

It's pretty damn soothing to him, too.

"It's alright, Will," Hannibal whispers, nuzzling his soaking wet hair. His fingers curl around Will's jaw, fitting underneath and into the hollow of his cheek, easing them apart so Will is forced to release his hand. Will lets out a halfhearted growl, snapping his teeth together again, and he can feel Hannibal smile against his temple. Hannibal's hand flattens on his jaw and Will lets out a weak noise, desperately clinging to Hannibal's coat. He's probably ruining it completely with blood, but can't find it in himself to care. "That's it, darling. Take your time. I'm not going anywhere."

Will tilts his head up, pushes his mouth to Hannibal's pulse. It's not racing, barely even above normal. Will's, conversely, is flying in his chest – he's drunk on so much blood, feels alive and warm, or maybe that's just because of the way Hannibal is holding him.

He burns Will's mouth, tempts him terribly despite his full belly. Hannibal doesn't pull him back, neither does he push forward – Will's decision, Will's choice, to bite. He shouldn't – if Jack sees what Will has done and then Hannibal walks away with a bite on his throat, Will's reputation, his position, maybe even his freedom, are all gone.

"Hannibal," he moans, torn with indecision. His fangs feel too sharp in his mouth, his hands won't stop shaking. He feels like he's losing his damn mind, and every breath brings more of Hannibal's scent, tempting him terribly. He might never feel full again until he gets Hannibal's neck in his teeth.

Hannibal is still purring, totally unafraid.

Will parts his teeth. Sets them close and daring -.

"Will!"

Will flinches, falling against the wall, and Hannibal straightens, still protecting him from the sun. Will shields his eyes and looks up as Jack's shadow falls over him. The wolf's expression is thunderous and he's holding his gun in his hand.

Hannibal lifts a hand and lets out a placating rumble. "I assure you, Agent Crawford, I have everything under control."

Jack's eyes flash, and he takes in the bites on Hannibal's hand, the smear of blood on him and Will both. The damning imprint of teeth Will left behind on his neck.

"Will killed Hobbs," he replies. "Probably would have killed Abigail, too."

"And he didn't," Hannibal replies. "Because I was there, keeping an eye on things, as you bade me do. Please restrain yourself from doing anything rash."

Jack growls.

"He caught your killer for you, Jack," Hannibal adds – gently, but with an edge of teeth. "He did his job. Now, please, feel free to go do yours, and leave me to do mine."

Jack lifts his chin, and glares at Will with all the wrath of God, and Will can't do anything but shake and try to catch his breath. His head is clearing, slow as the tide, but he's heartened by Hannibal's firm effort to defend him. Jack leaves with another threatening rumble, and Hannibal moves, crouching in front of Will and taking his face in both hands.

"Will," he says softly. Will blinks, frowns, tries to focus. All he can focus on is the tender brush of Hannibal's warm hands on his face, and he shivers, leaning into it. His fingers ache, wanting to soak themselves in heat, to bury his hands in the ribs of a man and drink his fill. He hasn't felt this untethered, this out of control, since he was first changed.

"I killed him," he whispers weakly. "I shouldn't –. I shouldn't have done that."

"You reacted to a threat," Hannibal says softly. "Do not waste your emotions on guilt for that animal."

Will huffs, bares his teeth in something that tries to be a smile, but fails. "Do you ever?" he whispers.

"I never feel guilty about anything," Hannibal replies, and smiles bright enough to rival the sun against his back. His shadow shields Will, just as Hannibal himself is. Will can hear the paramedics inside, binding and removing Abigail, hear them muttering between themselves about the 'leech' that made such a fucking mess.

He flinches, and curls up tighter against the wall.

"Ignore them," Hannibal coaxes, still petting his cheeks, up through his hair, down his throat and shoulders. Things wolves do, and Will is not a wolf, but it feels nice. Hannibal is warm, and Will's pulse jumps at every touch. "It's not that long ago that 'mutt' was a staple of the vocabulary."

Will huffs another weak laugh.

"Can you stand?"

"Probably," Will replies. After all, his body is physically stronger than ever, having just fed. It's his head that's all fucked up, alive with instincts he tries to deny, burning with desires he's not allowed to sate.

Hannibal nods, and stands, quickly gathering Will close and covering him from the sun. His hand moves to Will's nape, and Will shivers at the press of his nails, his wide palm. He nuzzles Hannibal's neck again and fights the urge to bite and keep biting until his teeth turn dull.

Hannibal embraces him, warm and strong, and Will lets himself sink into it, digging his fingers around Hannibal's coat and shivering again. His head clears a little more, and his mouth is wet, his hands and hair soaked. He clears his throat and steps back, careful to remain in the shade, and starts to lick his fingers clean as his belly settles, full and sated from so much fresh blood.

Hannibal gazes at him, assessing, but Will doesn't think it's wrong to call the gleam in his eyes 'proud'. He smiles. "Let me get you an umbrella and take you back to the hotel," he offers. Will winces, knowing he'll have to walk through all the medics, the forensic analysts, the cops…probably reporters too. Fuck, just what he needs – more people to see him and confirm that vampires are the wild, feral monsters everyone says they are.

But he nods, because the other option is to remain here, and that's just as bad. Hannibal leaves him for only a moment, and returns with a big black umbrella, large enough to cover them both. He also has an FBI jacket with a hood, and gives it to Will, who dons it and pulls it tight around his face.

Together, they hurry around the house, and through the clamoring crowd. Hannibal puts Will into one of the FBI vehicles, and drives them back to the hotel.

Much to Will's surprise, Jack clears him of any wrongdoings on the case. It's a lot of paperwork, and Will suspects much of the forgiveness from Jack is Hannibal's doing – despite everything, Will *did* solve the case. He did exactly what he was hired to do, just with a few messy and rough edges.

He isn't looking forward to going back to class, to the University. He's sure that word will have spread and anticipates the first two rows of his lecture hall being entirely empty, students too scared to sit too close.

He sighs, and rubs his hands over his mouth. He's back home, now, and normally it's Winston's turn to feed him, but his tongue burns with memory of Hobbs, how alive and warm he'd been – salty, like beef jerky, and ultimately so nourishing that Will didn't have to eat again for almost a full day after.

Hannibal has left him alone, for the most part, only sending the occasional text to check in. Jack calls Will once, to tell him Hannibal will continue to monitor him as he does his new job. Will aches – this is why he doesn't hunt humans, or avoids it as much as he can. Their blood is addictive, the withdrawal from it can send his kind into madness, make them into the creatures that people so fear. He never thought wolf blood would do the same, but the fact of the matter is that Will is hungry. He's *starving*, but the only thing that sounds good to him right now is…

Well.

He grabs his phone and calls Hannibal, who picks up on the second ring.

"Will." He sounds surprised. "Good evening. Are you alright?"

"I'm hungry," Will says. Straight to the point.

There is a pause, and then Hannibal says; "I have plenty of food here, if you're capable of driving. Or I could bring something to you."

Will growls. "No," he snaps. "I don't want –. I don't want that. I want something fresh."

Another pause. When Hannibal's voice comes again, it is low, and Will can hear him purring. "Anything in particular?"

You. Will doesn't say it. "Wolf," he replies, and wonders if it's as good as if he'd moaned Hannibal's name.

Hannibal's purr is loud and rumbling through the phone, powerful enough that Will's hands shake. "I have just the thing," he replies. "Meet me at the Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center."

"Okay."

"Come hungry."

Will nods, lets out a weak, eager sound, and listens to Hannibal's purr for a moment longer, before he hangs up the phone, hurries to his car – barefoot, disheveled, it hardly matters – and speeds away in a wide circle of flying mud.

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

> please note the new tags! also the first part of this chapter has a very graphic hunting/eating scene so feel free to skip over it or message me for details!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The night is dark when Will arrives at the Visitors' Center. He gets there before Hannibal, and is the only car in the little parking lot as he kills the engine and steps outside, taking in a deep breath. There are just enough woods here to implicate wilderness, and he can hear the rush of water close by, hidden by the trees.

He sits on the hood of his car, soaking in the heat of the engine as it pops and settles, and shivers, curling his toes and pressing them against the sun-warm bumper. He looks up, noting that so far away from light pollution, the stars are bright and the waning moon is gleaming, smiling down at him. The full moon happened last week, between closing the Hobbs' case and tonight, and he feels a brief but solid pang of regret, that he missed speaking to Hannibal during his shift. He thinks he would have appreciated seeing the wolf with his pelt shed.

His head tilts when he hears the rumble of another engine, winces and shields his eyes as headlights come into view from around the corner of the dark building. They dim immediately on seeing him, and Hannibal's car pulls up close to his with a smooth rumble. The engine quiets, and Hannibal climbs out. He's not wearing a suit, as Will has gotten used to seeing him, but clothes that hint vaguely at a sweat suit – still much more expensive and finer than normal people's, but undoubtedly more perishable.

Hannibal smiles at him, as Will climbs off his car and walks over. His eyes rake down Will's body, taking in his dirt-streaked clothes, his muddy, bare feet, his unkempt hair. He tilts his chin up, scenting Will, and Will doesn't have enough blood in him to blush, but he feels a skitter in his chest that is akin to an unsteady heartbeat.

"Were you waiting long?" Hannibal murmurs. Since they returned to Maryland and Virginia, they haven't seen each other, but spent enough time together in the aftermath of Hobbs' case for Will to learn that Hannibal, like most of his kind, is an incredibly tactile man. He doesn't resist the urge to put his cheek in Hannibal's offered hand, shivering when the wolf immediately drags light fingertips over his pale cheek and through his hair.

"No," he replies. He breathes in, soaking in Hannibal's scent – but there is another one, too, clinging to him like bad perfume. His nose wrinkles and he huffs, nuzzling Hannibal's wrist. "What is that?"

Hannibal's smile is wide and proud, and he pulls away and goes to the trunk of his car. Will follows, terribly curious.

"Your dinner," he says, and opens the trunk with the same flourish he might use when unveiling a delicious meal.

Will blinks down into the darkness, his eyes sharpening and adjusting quickly, and he meets those of a young man, a few years younger than he himself looks. The man is bound and has a wide strip of duct tape over his mouth, and starts to struggle, kicking and screeching, muffled, as they stare at him.

Will frowns, and looks to Hannibal in question.

"I've had my eyes on this one for a while," Hannibal murmurs, and reaches down, petting over the man's cheek almost tenderly. The man flinches, and snarls, and Will sucks in a breath – he smells like a wolf. His eyes are dark, like Hannibal's, his hair short-cropped and brown, his body stringy with youth but undeniably strong. "He's energetic; I think he'll make a fine hunt for us both."

Will's breath leaves him, shaky and quiet. "You brought him here to hunt him," he says, and it's not a question, because it's obvious that that's exactly what Hannibal has done.

"Fresh wolf," Hannibal confirms. "And I checked – O negative." He smiles warmly at Will, in a way that makes his teeth ache and his mouth feel dry. "Of course, if you don’t feel like hunting, I am more than happy to leave you to it."

"No, I -." Will shakes his head, his fingers curling. His hands feel so cold, and already he can imagine how it's going to feel, to push them against his wolf's red flesh while he drinks his fill. He tries to avoid live kills as much as possible, for it's too easy for his kind to sink into their mindset and feel their emotions and Will, well, he doesn't need the help – but Hannibal *caught* this wolf for him, and brought him to Will and Will knows enough about wolves to recognize the significance of this kind of thing. He can't help thinking, daring to hope, that this is Hannibal's attempt at *courting* him.

"Are you going to join me?" he whispers, and hopes Hannibal knows enough about vampires to understand the significance of that, too.

Hannibal's eyes are almost black despite the light of the moon, which shines on them both, casting them in a silvery glow. He's smiling in that way that crinkles the corners of his eyes, makes his entire body look bigger, preening like a proud bird.

"If you'd like me to," he replies with a soft purr. "I'd be honored."

Will shivers, and steps back, nodding. Hannibal nods as well, and reaches into his car, hauling the young wolf out of it and pushing him down to his knees. He rips the tape off his mouth, first, and the man gasps, wincing at the stinging pull, and rubs at his jaws with his trembling hands.

Before he can look up, Hannibal wraps a hand around his throat, and leans down, putting his teeth to the wolf's ear.

"If you howl, I will kill you immediately," he murmurs. He says it almost affectionately, his other hand gently petting over the wolf's hair, down his neck in a touch that would be soothing in any other situation. Will's throat burns, remembering a similar touch, and he swallows harshly.

Hannibal smiles, and his eyes are on Will when he speaks to the wolf again; "The river is that way," he says, and points the wolf's head towards the rush of water. "Make it to the shore and you'll be allowed to live."

Will swallows again, his fingers curling by his sides, and Hannibal unbinds the man's hands and moves away to let him stand. The wolf doesn't hesitate, taking off at a sprint towards the trees. Will watches him go.

Counts to three.

Hannibal laughs; "Go, darling. I'll be right behind you."

Will smiles, the expression too wide and sharp to be one purely of affection, and takes off behind the wolf, quickly gaining ground as they both disappear into the trees. He hasn't hunted – really, *truly* hunted – well, in as long as he can remember. Louisiana laws are a lot more lax than those up North; vampires are less discriminated against, and hearing of a poor boy or girl getting mauled is commonplace down there. 'Of course,' people would say, 'what did they expect, going into the swamps at night?'

Will has no trouble seeing at night – the darkness is his friend; this is where his kind thrive. He breathes in deeply, savoring the sweetness of the man's fear, his adrenaline making his heart race, blood leaping to the surface. Wolves aren't prey animals, but two against one is never going to be fair, and Will is hungry. His eyes burn, the last shred of blood in them sharpening his vision, making the edges of the trees shine with silver, the pulse of the wolf's scent lingering as obviously as a trail of gold.

He runs, and hears Hannibal in pursuit behind him, and then spearing off, flanking the wolf and herding him like lions towards the killing field. Will grins to himself, no thought of guilt in him for taking a life, only the sweet, promising call of a hunt and a kill; he understands, however dimly, that anyone Hannibal deemed fit to kill isn't worth his guilt.

He catches up to the wolf in the middle of a clearing, lunges for him and lands on his back, sending them both crashing and rolling to the ground. The wolf whines, wriggling onto his back, and swipes fiercely at Will's chest, clawing at his clothes and digging into his cold skin. He's so *warm*, and Will purrs despite the sting of pain, presses a hand to his chest to feel his racing heart.

"Shh," he whispers, and fists his other hand in the wolf's hair. He wrenches his head to one side, exposing his neck, and bites. Immediately, fear and pain rush into his head from the blood-connection, the man's memories of Hannibal attacking him in the parking lot slamming

into Will's head. Will trembles, moaning at the taste of fresh wolf blood, heady and rich and so much *better* than his dogs, than humans.

He swallows thickly, too hungry for decorum, blood rushing up around his teeth and his lips as he takes another drink. The wolf's blood seems eager to flood his mouth, coating his throat and pooling in his stomach. He drinks, until the wolf's body convulses, and he grows slick with sweat beneath Will's body, going into shock.

This is what makes it taste good. The limp, helpless sweetness of a body giving up the ghost, submitting to the inevitability of death, of Will himself. Killing and consuming one's kills is the ultimate act of dominance, it's the thing that makes Will what he is; the thing he thinks about in the brightest hours of the day and lingers on whenever he teaches his classes and wishes, *fuck*, just wishes that he could have a taste.

He hears Hannibal approaching, and unlike he normally is with his kills, Will feels no threat, no possessiveness over it. Perhaps that is telling, as he allows Hannibal to crowd him, gently nudging him to one side so the wolf's chest is exposed.

Will lifts his head, gasping, the savage bite he left on the wolf's neck oozing with blood, and meets Hannibal's eyes, which are gleaming a soft mix of gold and red – wolf colors, his own hunger showing. Will bares his teeth in a smile when Hannibal tears at the other wolf's shirt, exposing his heaving chest.

"May I?" he purrs.

Will nods, and watches, rapt, as Hannibal's claws sharpen, and he digs into the soft flesh below the wolf's ribs, easily splitting him apart. Will's own belly aches in sympathy, and he licks his teeth, snarling when Hannibal reaches below his ribs, blood soaking and slicking his forearm, and twists, and yanks with a grunt, separating the wolf's beating heart.

He removes it as it stutters and gives its last, holding it up in the light. Will's hands shake, as they didn't during the hunt, and he watches, utterly rapt, as Hannibal smiles, and takes a bite out of one of the engorged, slick ventricles. The organ melts to his teeth as easily as butter, and fresh blood leaks out from the large hole.

Will swallows, and whines.

Hannibal looks at him, smiles, and offers it to him. "Eat," he murmurs, and Will takes it, their hands curling around each other as Hannibal keeps hold of the heart, and lowers his mouth to it, tonguing at the hole and slicking his tongue with the fresh blood inside. He licks deeper into it, groaning with relief, his fangs aching and leaking venom as he sinks them into the heart between Hannibal's fingers and takes a bite of his own.

They consume it like that; Hannibal taking his piece, and then feeding Will whatever comes out from the innards of it. Will cuts his teeth on the heartstrings, pushes his tongue through the valves, and licks over Hannibal's palm when he crunches the cartilage around the aorta with a final bite.

Hannibal is purring openly, his fingers flattening along Will's jaw like he wants to feel Will eating. They're close, now, leaning together over their shared kill, and Will lets out a weak little sound – he's both starving and well-fed, gluttonous and sated.

Hannibal's eyes burn, and it feels natural when Will leans in, cradling his wrists, and kisses him. He can taste their shared kill on Hannibal's tongue, licks over his teeth, and Hannibal shudders, growling low when he licks the point of Will's fangs, undoubtedly able to taste the venom there – vampires, older ones, can paralyze their prey if they so desire, mute their thoughts so they feel only numb and high; that shock-feeling making them easier to drink and more pleasant to eat.

His eyes are black when they pull apart, and Will's fingers tighten around his wrists.

Hannibal smiles, and lifts a hand, petting through Will's blood-soaked hair and pushing it back from his face. He cradles Will's nape, like wolves do, and draws him back to the neck of the dead wolf. "Eat, darling," he purrs, right by Will's ear, and Will lets out a weak, helpless noise, and obeys.

It's more difficult drawing blood than it is simply drinking the excess, but Will is so hungry, and easily pulls at the wolf's neck as Hannibal entertains himself with removing more organs. Every now and again he pets over Will's trembling shoulders, offers him a bite of meat, which Will takes eagerly.

He knows exactly what this is – wolves make it no secret what their courting rituals are, especially since they started inbreeding with humans. He's never heard of a wolf and vampire sharing their kills, but it makes far too much sense to him – one of them takes the blood, the other takes the rest of the body.

By the time he's done and there is no more left for him to take, he's panting and trembling, his eyes closed and soft moans of relief ripped from his chest as Hannibal pets through his hair. Hannibal rises, and circles the body, crouches down and presses his weight onto Will like he did outside Hobbs' house, though there is no sunlight to shield him from, now. Will likes it – he knows it's a wolf thing, a provider sheltering and caring for his packmate, but it's nice. Hannibal burns.

His fingers curl, and he pushes his hands through the hole Hannibal made below the other wolf's ribs, gasping at the feeling of lingering warmth soaking into his fingers. Every part of him feels alive, *truly* alive, and his heart is racing.

Hannibal makes a quiet, pleased sound, his chest vibrating with a purr as he gently kisses Will's exposed neck, and wraps a hand around his chest to feel his trembling heart. "Will," he breathes, like he has never been so satisfied, "you are undeniably beautiful as you are, but I would keep you red and raw for me all the time."

Will closes his eyes. "For you?" he echoes. Aches.

He feels Hannibal smile against his pulse. His free hand slides down Will's arm, fingers curling around his wrist like he wants to feel Will's pulse there, too.

Will shivers, drawing his hands back, allowing Hannibal to pull him closer to the wolf's warm, strong chest. He tilts his head away, giving Hannibal more access to his neck, and moans quietly, wetting his lips as Hannibal mouths over his pulse.

"If you're amenable," Hannibal purrs, and it's been a long time since Will felt this safe, this wanted. It's a novel feeling, and one he likes. A lot. He lifts his chin as the hand over his heart rises, thumbing over his bared neck.

"This is exactly what I think it is, isn't it?" he whispers.

Hannibal huffs a laugh. "Contrary to what you might believe, wolves don't share their kills with just anyone," he replies warmly. If he's offended by Will's false ignorance, he doesn't show it. His claws have retracted, now, formed back into dull, manicured nails that Will feels along his throat. "And my offer does not come with conditions, Will."

"Hard to believe that when you're holding me like this," Will replies.

Hannibal smiles, unrepentant. "You like it," he purrs, and Will can't even deny that because he does, he really fucking does. "And you kissed me first."

Will huffs, and turns his head, forcing Hannibal's mouth from his neck. Their noses brush, nuzzling like wolves do, and he sighs and licks, delicately, at the corner of Hannibal's mouth, smiling when Hannibal chases him, but he pulls away.

"I'm not a wolf," he murmurs. That much is blatantly obvious. "I'm not going to behave like one."

Hannibal smiles. "I'm not a vampire," he replies lightly. "Ah, but that's the trouble, isn't it? Your kind isn't used to reciprocity."

Will winces.

Hannibal straightens, and Will swallows back a pathetic little noise at the loss of his warmth, glad when Hannibal doesn't go far, merely kneels in the bloodied grass, unzips his jacket, and tugs at the collar, exposing his neck.

Will's eyes flash, and widen. He meets Hannibal's steady gaze.

"You're serious," he murmurs. Of course, this isn't the first time Hannibal mentioned it, but it *means* something to people like Will. Vampires don't offer their necks to anyone – everything about their nature is *take*, it's force, it's 'Adapt or die'. Wolves can be medicated, treated, and live their lives as humans if they wanted to. Vampires have no choice.

Hannibal smiles. "Deadly serious," he replies.

Will huffs. "That's a shitty joke."

Hannibal merely grins, and doesn't otherwise move. The arch of his neck is so fucking *tempting*. Will leans in, cradles his chin and tilts him, makes him expose more of it. He

touches his wet mouth to Hannibal's throat, breathes in his woodsmoke-whiskey scent, and his throat is suddenly so dry again.

He works one of his thumbs against the tip of a fang, bites until his skin parts, beading up with fresh blood and a slick coating of clear venom, and pushes it against Hannibal's lower lip in offering.

"It'll help with the pain," he explains, and as Hannibal parts his lips and sucks Will's thumb into his mouth, Will trembles, and snarls, and bites him in turn. Hannibal's thoughts rush to him like they were simply waiting for permission, and Will snarls again, lunging for him and sending him onto his back. His fangs sink in – he's much more careful with Hannibal's neck than with that other wolf's, but he tastes so fucking *good*.

He feels Hannibal's consciousness brush up along his own; warm, soft like fur, curling around his head as he pulls his thumb away and settles his hand over Hannibal's throat, forcing him to lie still as he drinks. He feels that Hannibal was not lying – sees, through his eyes, Will enter Jack's office the first time he met; the heated intrigue turning to delighted pleasure when Will snapped at him, proved his cunning and intelligence with his deductions; proved that he would not be cowed like a wolf; showed Hannibal his refined palette and his killer instinct.

He takes another large mouthful before forcing himself to stop, the taste of Hannibal's own kill already in his blood and burning his mouth like the aftertaste of good liquor. He moans, licking over the wounds, prompting them to seal so that all that will remain are two tiny injection marks from his fangs.

Hannibal shudders beneath him, clutching Will tightly, and rolls him onto his back. Will gasps, blinking up at Hannibal, and he's growing to quite like the look of the wolf with light behind him, casting his face in shadow so that all he can see is the glow of his eyes.

Hannibal's hand flattens in his hair, pulling his head up and back, chin lifted. He lowers his mouth to Will's neck and Will shivers, hands flattening wide on Hannibal's chest. Wolves bite, that's no secret either. They do it to assert dominance, they do it to mark their mates. There's no doubt in Will's mind which reason Hannibal intends to bite him for.

They can't read minds, though – Will's thoughts will remain his own. Hannibal pauses, licks over his rushing heartbeat, and lets out a quiet rumble in question.

Will's fingers curl, and he pulls at his clothes. "Do it," he whispers. The bite will probably heal by sunrise, but it's the principle of the thing.

Hannibal snarls, all-animal, low and vibrating through every place where their bodies are touching. Will swallows, tilts his head back further, and arches with a sharp cry as he feels Hannibal's dangerous, savage teeth sinking into his neck.

It hurts; there's no venom to ease the pain, and Will groans, trembling. If vampires have any prey instinct left in them after the change, that feeling is only triggered by teeth at their neck – freshly-fed, Will is at his most vulnerable, his most human, and though he won't die, Hannibal could do serious damage if he chose to. He shivers as he feels Hannibal's lower

teeth sink in as well, trapping a wide swath of skin and flesh between them, kneading his jaws to encourage Will to welt and scar.

He clutches at Hannibal's back, whining softly, nails digging through his clothes and into his warm flesh. He doesn't pull, resists the urge to shred and tear in self-defense, and hears Hannibal purring as he pulls his teeth free and licks over the wound, making Will flinch and whine again.

Then, Hannibal kisses him, and Will goes lax, drinking his own blood from Hannibal's tongue – Hannibal's blood, the shared taste of their kill. It's wild and unrefined and everything wolves aren't, and it's viscerally satisfying to know he can pull Hannibal down to his level. Or maybe Hannibal is raising him up – it's hard to tell, and it's unimportant, as Hannibal cradles his throat like he cradled Abigail's, stymying the sluggish blood flow, and kisses Will like it's the single most satisfying thing he's ever done.

They're both soaked with dirt and blood, and Hannibal smells wonderful; alive and wanting and thrumming with power. Though it's not an instinct he possesses, it feels natural, when Hannibal pulls away, to lick over his mouth like wolves do.

Hannibal smiles, and purrs loud enough to silence the cicadas. He pets through Will's hair, cradles his nape with both hands, and kisses him again.

"Are you still hungry?" he murmurs, almost playful. Utterly smug. Will likes him like that.

He grins in reply. "Always."

Hannibal smiles. "I'll make sure there's plenty of wolf for you tomorrow."

Will was right – by morning, Hannibal's bite has completely healed, leaving nothing but a lingering pinkness to his neck to remind him that last night had happened at all. Vampires require very little sleep, and usually do it during the warmest and sunniest parts of the day, but Will is too restless, too energetic to sleep, and he's so warm and heavy with the hearty meal that he skips breakfast as he drives to his afternoon lectures.

Hannibal likes him hungry, and Will likes it when Hannibal feeds him.

To his surprise, his lectures continue as they always do – his human students must see that he's well-fed, and though they are undoubtedly wondering just *how*, exactly, and where he got his meal, they're comfortable enough to sit in the front row, and the hall is packed as it usually is. Their scents don't bother him – Hannibal's taste lingers on his tongue, so powerful and satisfying that Will doesn't know how anything else could compare.

By the end of his day, he's hungry, though whether that's a natural thing or the anticipation of another dinner with Hannibal, he couldn't say. His lecture clears, and then there's only one

woman left – Beverly, grinning at him and leaning against the door with her arms folded across her chest.

"Hey!" she says, and joins him in walking towards the door. Will winces at the flood of sunlight from the upper windows, and begins donning all his protective clothing as they walk towards the front entrance. "That was a good lecture – I can see why you're popular."

"Serial killers always draw the crowds," Will replies.

She nods. "I brought you a snack!" she says, and reaches into her bag, pulling out another black plastic bag. No straw; she hands that to him separately. Will blinks at her, touched by the offer, and flushes when she adds with a wink; "A little birdie told me you like O negative. I snagged the last bag."

Will halts, gaping in shock. It didn't occur to him that Hannibal would go around *telling* people his preferences, or that he would share that knowledge with Beverly, who has clearly already proven she's more than comfortable giving Will the leftovers from the victims she analyzes.

He takes the bag gingerly, and clears his throat. "Hannibal told you?"

"Yup," she replies, popping the 'P'. "He and I go way back. He asked me to look out for you since he's busy during the day."

Will shifts his weight, and isn't sure if he's more uncomfortable or warmed by Hannibal's thoughtfulness.

"Thanks," he finally says, flatly, settling on uncomfortable. He's a grown man, and has been a vampire for long enough – recent behavior aside, he doesn't often lose control of himself and he's far from the feral members of his species.

Her eyes darken, and she presses her lips together, and touches his shoulder gently. "Hey," she says, and ducks her head, forcing their eyes to meet. "You're gonna have to get used to people looking out for you. It's a wolf thing, sure, but it's also a human thing. We take care of our friends."

Will frowns. He hasn't had a 'friend' in as long as he can remember.

"Besides, I brought it up first," she says, dropping her hand. "We had a victim who had bees growing in him – which, gross – and Hannibal's some kind of honeybee expert, I guess, and he's the only wolf Jack uses to consult, so he was called in. He only told me 'cause I asked about it, so you don't have to worry about him blurting your secrets all over the place."

That…is reassuring. Somewhat. Will manages a faint smile.

"And," Beverly continues with a conspiratorial grin, "it doesn't take a wolf to see that he's pretty much ass over elbows for you. I believe the word 'twitterpated' was thrown around."

Will frowns.

"It's from *Bambi*," she says, rolling her eyes.

"Yes, I'm familiar with the movie," Will mutters. He rubs his hands through his hair, places the bag carefully in his coat pocket, and puts on his gloves. She grins at him, and, playfully, he adds; "Vampires are pretty much the only reason midnight movie screenings exist, you know – we're not just holed up in our castles lamenting the woes of being undead."

"Don't flatter yourself – humans don't sleep well either," she replies, her smile wide and bright. "Well, I have a date with a bug lady. Drive safe and don't let the UV radiation bite!"

Will huffs, but he's smiling as she turns and walks away. He puts his cap and sunglasses on, wraps his scarf around his face, and heads out to the parking lot, glad that while the sun is bright and makes him wince, he doesn't feel the heat.

Hannibal opens the door for him with a smile, letting Will inside and helping him to shed his protective clothing and his coat, hanging them all up. Then, he cups Will's jaw, lifts his chin and eyes his face. "You need wider glasses," he murmurs, thumbing gently at the pink, smarting skin at the corner of his eye where his scarf and cap didn't quite do the job.

Will hums. "It'll fade away in a while."

Hannibal smiles at him, and releases him, and Will aches for his warmth, much more pleasant and wanted than the burn of the sun. He follows Hannibal into his kitchen, nostrils flaring at the scent of roasting meat. *Wolf*, his brain tells him, knowing the scent of it now.

"Leftovers from our hunt last night," Hannibal explains. He hands Will a glass of dark red wine, and Will takes a sip.

Pauses, and licks his lips.

"Is this…?"

Hannibal meets his eyes, and smiles widely. "You seemed to like how I taste."

Will's fingers curl, and it takes a lot of effort to control his strength, to not break the fragile stem of the glass. He breathes in deeply, and takes another long drink, feeling Hannibal's eyes on him the entire time. The wine is rich and full-bodied, quite literally, and fills his mouth like a fog.

"I do," he rasps, and sets it down again.

"Good," Hannibal purrs. "There's still some time left on the roast. Would you like to sit?"

Will nods. It doesn't feel like he'll be able to stand much longer.

They go to Hannibal's study, which is similarly dark-lit – wolves and vampires are the lowest drain on power, though vampires have the edge since they have no need for air conditioning or central heating. There's a fire, low, casting the room in golden shadows. Will sits in one of the comfortable, thickly-padded leather chairs, settling with a sigh, as Hannibal takes a seat opposite.

"Beverly gave me a blood bag today," he says. Hannibal tilts his head. "Apparently you two have been talking."

"I mentioned you had a favorite flavor," Hannibal replies, unrepentant, smiling. "No more scandalous than telling her you preferred dark chocolate."

Will snorts, and takes another drink of wine. "Maybe to you."

"If I overstepped, I apologize."

Will shakes his head. "I appreciate the gesture, I guess," he says with a shrug. "And she seems cool – not afraid of me, which is…novel." Hannibal nods, and sips his own wine. Will eyes him, and tilts his head. "I'm going to try this new thing where I'm not instinctively offended by everything you do."

Hannibal laughs. "Oh?"

"Mm. It makes me rude."

Hannibal's eyes darken, and he smiles wide enough to show his teeth. "I like you rude."

Will arches a brow. "You're in the minority, then," he says coolly. "Wolves go crazy over social graces. But…" He smiles. "You're not like other wolves, are you?"

"I think it's more a case of an exception proving the rule. I despise rudeness in others – I think it's the ugliest thing in the world. But even the ugly, and the macabre, can be beautiful in the right light."

Will huffs, and drinks again. He can taste Hannibal in the wine, and it makes his stomach clench in hunger. His fingers of his free hand curl against his thigh, remembering when Hannibal called him 'beautiful'. Hannibal's consciousness, his presence, have sat in his skull since Will bit him, haunting him like a shadow with horns and teeth and golden eyes.

"Since you promised not to be offended, I'll push my luck," Hannibal adds playfully, after a moment of companionable, if charged, silence. Will hums. "How old are you?"

Will blinks, and meets his gaze. "Thirty-seven," he replies with an arched brow. Hannibal merely grins at him. "But to answer the question you're not really asking, because that would be *rude*, I was changed…about twenty years ago."

Hannibal tilts his head, clearly surprised. "So young," he breathes, alight with intrigue. "Yet you possess capabilities I have not seen outside your peers who are in their hundreds."

Will lifts his shoulders in a shrug. "The woman who changed me was one of the First," he replies. "Guess there's something to be said for bloodline." Because what Hannibal is saying isn't untrue – venom, sun-resistance, even the blood-connection are all gifts his kind don't inherit. They evolve, as much as they are capable of doing so, and the process for that is slow when one lives forever.

"What about you?" he asks.

"Nearing eighty," Hannibal replies, smiling. "My family come from a long line of purebloods, so I can expect to live for several hundred years, if time and circumstance are kind to me."

Will swallows harshly, and winces. Of course. Hannibal *will* die, eventually. He pets over his throat.

"I've made you uncomfortable."

"Talking about next summer's plans around someone who won't be there for them isn't comfortable," Will snaps, harshly. He swallows again, and dulls his teeth on the wine.

"I have a theory about that, if you're willing to hear it."

Will hums, and gestures for him to continue.

"Of course, you know this, but a vampire's venom is what they use to make new ones," Hannibal says gently. Will nods – drain the body and fill it with new life, so the saying goes. "I don't think it's completely absurd to hypothesize that, on a diet of vampire venom, one might prolong their life. Perhaps permanently."

Will freezes, and looks at him. Hannibal is smiling without smiling, his eyes bright, utterly delighted to have captured Will's attention. He drags his fingers over his neck again, drawing Hannibal's eye, and he feels his neck throb like it's still sore from Hannibal's teeth.

"No one's tested that," he says weakly.

"Of course not – who would willingly become a vampire, or tie themselves to one, to prove it?"

Will sucks in a breath through his teeth. "An exception to the rule."

Hannibal smiles, and, when Will is still silent, he murmurs; "Tell me what you're thinking."

"I'm…surprised," Will admits. "What you're suggesting is essentially being turned. It's against the law, though I don't think you care about that. But it…implies a bond." He wets his lips, and drinks again – fuck, his throat is so *dry*. "You would be mine."

Hannibal's smile is so, so wide. Will's teeth ache.

"It's a theory," he says gently, a soothing purr rumbling in the back of his throat. "One I am more than willing to test, if you're amenable."

Will swallows, his stomach tense.

"Tell me what you're thinking."

"I'm thinking I might die all over again if you don't kiss me right now."

Hannibal smiles, and is on his feet in an instant, glass of wine set to one side. Will discards his own, and lets Hannibal pull him to his feet, shivering and whining weakly as Hannibal kisses him, one strong hand threading tightly through his hair, the other low on his back. Will's mouth is wet – with venom, with wine – and he moans as Hannibal licks over his fangs, eagerly swallowing the taste of it down. Hannibal makes a noise, a snarl and purr all mixed into one, and Will can do nothing but cling to him and let himself be kissed.

The kitchen timer dings, and Will snaps his teeth, growling with impatience.

Hannibal laughs, and nudges their noses together, eyes low-lidded, smile wide. "Come, darling," he purrs, and takes Will's hands, drawing him towards the dining room. Will follows eagerly.

The food is delicious, of course. Hannibal feeds him his meat rare, plies him with his blood-sweetened wine, and they both eat heartily until Will can blush and grow warm for him again. Then, driven by some unspoken mutual agreement, they go back to the study. No wine, no nightcap or coffee, just Will pressing himself greedy and brazen into Hannibal's lap, pinning him onto his fancy, comfortable couch.

He runs his fingers through Hannibal's hair, touches his nose to his pulse and breathes in his scent. He likes Hannibal when he's fresh-fed, burning as his body digests his meal and his pulse rushes, blood swelling to the surface in an eager offer to soak Will's tongue. He licks over Hannibal's neck, groaning gently as Hannibal paws at him, drags his claws down Will's back and lets them grind together.

Just like his heartbeat, and his blush, Will's body can only react to desire when it's drenched in blood. Hannibal must know that, and finds deep pleasure in it, as he cups Will's thighs and lets Will rut against him, their erections trapped in the heat gathering between what little air they allow to separate them.

Hannibal shows his throat, drags his nails over Will's nape to bare his own, and Will bites him, parts his jaws wide and doesn't drink, merely douses Hannibal with his venom as Hannibal snarls and clutches at him.

Hannibal's thoughts are a wash of red; aching, aching desire, a purring wolf with its ears perked up and tail wagging. Will shudders, tonguing at the blood welling up around his fangs, edges his blunter teeth between the holes to get the wounds to open up a little wider and give him more to drink. He tastes so fucking good, Will knows he can quickly become addicted to it.

He feels, amidst the red, a flash of yellow longing – Will knows what Hannibal is thinking, can bite him and feel it, but Hannibal cannot feel the same. Wolves don't have that power, but there's another way Will can share it.

He pulls back, licking his lips, and cradles Hannibal's head in his hands, resting their foreheads together as Hannibal pants and trembles below him. He meets Hannibal's eyes, and lets his own open – he has always, viciously, tamped down his instinct to enthrall. It's violation at best, and humans are so susceptible to it that it can lead to terrible things. It's against the law for a vampire to enthrall anyone but their own kind, but he meets Hannibal's eyes, sees him blink, pupils flaring out wide, and knows Hannibal doesn't give a damn about that in the slightest.

Will smiles. "You're mine," he whispers. Lets his voice go low, hypnotic – he can't enthrall without his homegrown accent coming through, and his smile widens when Hannibal's lashes flutter and he sucks in a deep, shaky breath. His hands flatten on Will's hips, subtly arching for more friction, and Will touches his thumbs to the corners of Hannibal's mouth and shakes his head. "No. Eyes on me."

Hannibal's gaze snaps to him, no color left to his iris. Will knows his own are black, ringed with red as vampires do. He smiles, shows his teeth, his red coated fangs. "That's it," he purrs. Their noses brush as he gives Hannibal a sweet nuzzle in reward, pets over his upper lip to watch how it twitches and curls back.

Thrall is not a one-way street, as humans and wolves are so quick to believe. Yes, most of Will's kind use it as a veritable sledgehammer of compulsion, in and out to make sure their bidding is done, but it can be so much more than that. As Hannibal opens for him, Will can open too, and so he does, freeing his thoughts and following Hannibal's to a place rich with gold and marble.

He cups Hannibal's face, sighs as Hannibal stiffens, scent turning thick with desire. There is a wolf in their shared minds, and Will goes to it, petting over its strong shoulders and thick pelt. He kisses Hannibal, their eyes closing in sync, a slow blink as Hannibal trembles and gasps into the kiss.

He pushes his feelings through his hands, through his eyes, lets Hannibal see his gratitude, his adoration, the ultimate pleasure and satisfaction he felt consuming their shared kill; the safe feeling he got when Hannibal shielded him from the sun, and then again, from Jack. His trust, his patience, his sharp-edged brand of love.

Hannibal moans, weakly, his hands sliding up Will's back. "Will," he gasps. He's shining with sweat, hair damp, cheeks stained with a pretty blush that Will wants to taste. He tilts his head and licks the corner of Hannibal's mouth, delighted when Hannibal snarls, chases him, but Will is strong and can pin him down.

He shivers, thinking of if he were able to fight Hannibal – mating with anyone but his own kind is impossible; Will is too capable, too volatile. One wayward touch too strong and a human would break beneath his hands. But not Hannibal, no, Hannibal is powerful, he's invincible. Will can feel it like iron in his blood.

Hannibal's arms tighten around him, his hips lift, grinding in a way so deliciously unrefined. Will's lungs stutter around a moan, he pushes his pride and satisfaction through the thrall, watches the wolf in Hannibal pant and snarl.

He drops his gaze, kisses wide and warm along Hannibal's pulse and finds it *flying*. He pets through Hannibal's sweat-damp hair, growls and kisses again as Hannibal scratches down his back – too polite to rip his clothes, since Will has to go home at some point, but when the moon is full or close to it, when he's more animal than man…

He bites again, floods Hannibal with his venom, and Hannibal goes completely still. His thoughts white out, an explosion of light and heat as he shudders, grinds up, and Will gasps – he's never fed from someone mid-orgasm and immediately wonders why the fuck he never has. Then again, he can't imagine it could be nearly this satisfying if it were anyone else.

He groans, pawing at Hannibal's shoulders, drinks deeply of his pleasure-rich blood as he grinds down against the stain growing in Hannibal's lap, his softening cock. And then Hannibal snarls, and wrenches his head back, rises and plants him on the couch and sinks to his knees between Will's legs.

He tears at Will's clothes, freeing his cock, and swallows him down with a low moan, and Will cries out, clutching at his head, thighs trembling as Hannibal takes him all the way down with ease, so fucking *hot* and wet on the inside. Will throws his head back, hisses, pulls and scratches at Hannibal's hair and neck as Hannibal sucks his cock.

"F-*fuck*," he groans, stiffening as he comes. Nothing comes out, because vampires don't have that luxury, but Hannibal goes lax, purring in delight as Will shivers. Still caught in the aftereffects of Will's thrall, Will is sure he can feel it the second Will finishes. He pulls back slowly and Will hisses, flinching when Hannibal's lips seal around his sensitive cockhead, continuing to suck, and in their shared mind space, the wolf curls around him and purrs loudly.

He releases Will, nuzzling his thigh as Will pets his head and tries to catch his breath. Not that he really needs to breathe, but his heart could certainly calm the Hell down. He's still hard, because there's nothing telling him to stop, and he lifts his head as Hannibal licks over his shaft, and looks incredibly pleased with himself.

Smug bastard. Will might have to keep him forever.

"That's interesting," he murmurs, and lifts his eyes.

Will huffs, and rolls his own. "It'll go down in a second," he replies, blushing when Hannibal merely grins at him. The scent of his come is sharp, fills the air like salt and lime after a shot of tequila, and makes Will's head feel warm and heavy. He sighs, and tugs Hannibal upright, correcting his clothes. He quickly finds his place on Hannibal's lap again, because he likes it there.

Hannibal is purring openly, his scent thick with satisfaction and he pets through Will's hair. "Perhaps, next time, you'd be willing to let me experiment," he purrs. Will arches a brow.

"My knot lasts for several minutes, typically. It'd be interesting to see how many times I can bring you to orgasm during."

Will blinks at him, and then flushes deeply, his cheeks burning with pins and needles. "Shit, I forgot you wolves knot."

Hannibal grins at him, unapologetically. "If you prefer, I'm sure I can make use of a non-existent refractory period the other way around." Will wonders if it's possible for vampires to hold onto enough blood for a perma-blush. Hannibal's fingers drag down Will's chest, to his erection which is, thankfully, starting to go away – though Hannibal's touch makes him stiffen and groan softly all over again.

"I guess everything I've heard about a wolf's sex drive is true," he mutters without heat.

"We are an insatiable lot," Hannibal concedes. He's still smiling, his eyes sharpening and returning to their normal color as he recovers from Will's thrall. "Though I've heard vampire orgies can last for weeks." His eyes drop again, and darken. "It's easy to see why."

"You're terrible," Will huffs, and drags his fingers over the blood stain on Hannibal's neck. He leans in, licking over the puncture wounds and cleaning him up. Hannibal sighs, smiling, and gently rubs his hands up and down Will's back, no doubt savoring Will's warmth before it fades away.

He nuzzles Hannibal's neck, sighing, content to sit and let himself be petted and purred at. Hannibal is so *warm*, and strong, and Will can feel his sleepless morning catching up with him. He's sure Hannibal is tired, too – thrall can be physically taxing for anyone, even a wolf.

Hannibal lets out a soft noise, gaining his attention, and says, "I want you to know, Will, that everything I've offered you, and told you, has been sincere." Will hums tiredly. "Perhaps you already know that, but I felt it should be said."

Will smiles, and flattens a hand over Hannibal's heart. "I know," he murmurs. "Everything I showed you was sincere, too."

"I'm glad."

"And…if you wanted to do this experiment of yours, I'm game." He lifts his head and meets Hannibal's eyes. "But my kind are territorial, Hannibal. Make yourself mine and I'm not letting you go."

Hannibal eyes flash, and his smile is wide. "Will, darling," he sighs, and cups Will's face in a gentle touch, "I told you before – I'm not going anywhere."

Will nods, and leans in, kissing him deeply until he hears Hannibal purr again.

"I know."

Chapter End Notes

spoiler alert: Hannibal's theory pans out ;D

Thank you everyone for indulging me! I hope you guys liked it <3

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

I couldn't resist adding a part three. Hope you guys like it! It took forever.

The fact of the matter is that, as much as he is completely, wholeheartedly, and violently possessive of his bond with Hannibal, and utterly proud over the fact that he can call this powerful wolf with such an ancient bloodline *his*, Hannibal's neatness makes him itch. His finery and silent house, lacking the scuffle of dog nails on hardwood, bereft of dust, in perfect order, makes Will's fingers curl and his mouth flood with venom, overwhelmed with the desire to mark and mar it with his own influence. Vampires are creatures of rot and decay, dust and mildew, stereotyped to live in damp old castles, and sleep in cobweb lined coffins, and they prey on the sick and weak, kill messy and slow, unrefined, monstrous, slaves to their nature.

Will has tried not to let it bother him, because for the most part it doesn't – when he's at his home, or out in public with Hannibal, he can ignore the high collars and carefully coifed hairdo, the lack of his own scent plastered to Hannibal like a sheen, the well-groomed and feline way Hannibal holds himself and acts so cordial and polite with whomever he interacts while Will lingers in his shadow like a suspicious housecat.

Every night, Hannibal puts a bite in his neck, and every morning it's healed over, so he can forgive Hannibal trying to mark him in other ways – and he is trying, though he's attempting to be coy about it. Will sometimes catches traces of his scent at his home when he returns after lecturing at the university, finds subtle changes in his house – fancier dog food, evidence of cleaning and vacuuming, a new suit in his wardrobe and some of his older, rattier plaid shirts conspicuously missing.

He's not an unclean person himself – his time in the police academy and a militant upbringing as a child had trained him to appreciate order, and after he'd been changed, it had become a matter of survival to appear as a well-kept member of society. People have this unfortunate habit of associating cleanliness and appearance with safety; the more he looks like an upstanding 'good' person, the less people tend to shy away from him, the less their eyes linger on his own, searching for a telltale giveaway of red denoting his hunger.

It's a delicate balance, as most things are, and Will tries not to let it bother him, but even he has his limits.

"A dinner party," he repeats flatly, staring at Hannibal from his side of the dinner table. Their meal is finished, Will's plate holding a ring of juice from the steak Hannibal had fed him, fork and knife tucked neatly together and resting at an angle in a mimicking gesture to the wolf. Hannibal smiles at him, and takes a sip of his wine. "You want to invite me to a dinner party."

"I think you should meet my friends," Hannibal replies calmly, like they're discussing the weather. Will swallows, looking down at his plate. "I don't have a 'pack' in the traditional sense, but I hold a close-knit group of acquaintances, and occasionally host dinner for them." His smile widens when Will doesn't say anything. "Some of them have already attempted coy remarks regarding my changed scent, and the bite on my neck. I know they are terribly curious to meet anyone I would let that close."

Of course they would be. At Hannibal's age, his unmated status is a rare and curious thing – even more curious, the sudden change to that of a happily claimed wolf. And Will is sure there is some difference, though he's never been able to admire it post-bite to say, between the way vampires leave a mating mark, and wolves do. Even if that were not the case, most wolves don't live as long as Hannibal would even without Will's venom, that's why they can afford to take human mates – his bloodline and his power sets him apart. He's a commodity, a high-value diamond Will snatched from their curious claws, and while normally the thought would fill him with pride, the idea of *meeting* these people sets his teeth on edge.

His hands flex, and he rests them on either side of his plate, staring at the watery shine of meat juice on the white porcelain. "I imagine a lot of them will be surprised," he says, because he can't think of anything else to say.

"Surprised, yes," Hannibal replies with a nod. "But not unfriendly. At least, I certainly hope not. If they are, then I will be sure to swiftly remove them from my inner circle." Will blinks, and looks at him. "Anyone who would look down on you just because of what you are is no friend of mine."

"I'm not going to be some tool for you to justify pruning your pack," Will says tightly. "And I don't need you to ingratiate me to anyone."

Hannibal tilts his head to one side. "I've offended you," he murmurs, his keen eyes steadily focused on Will's face. "It was not my intention."

"I know it's not your *intention*," Will says, "but I've known Jack long enough to know wolf pack bonding when I see it. You're trying to make me like one of you, but I'm not like one of you, and I refuse to act or pretend that I am."

"Ah." Hannibal's expression smooths out in understanding. He smiles, setting his glass down, and sits back in his chair, lacing his fingers together and resting them on his stomach in a relaxed, contented pose. Will envies him that – he always seems so calm, so put together, effortlessly. Must come with the territory – Will has never managed to look that relaxed in his entire Goddamn afterlife.

Hannibal's head tilts, and he sighs through his nose. "Then I suppose I can only say that you are not obligated to attend, Will, but I am always happy to have you at my table. I don't want you to feel like you need to make yourself scarce simply because you will not be the only person I'm feeding."

"And what will you feed them?" Will asks, lifting his chin. "Wolf? Human?"

Hannibal's eyes shine with amusement. "I was thinking lamb."

Will doesn't want to laugh. Clinging stubbornly to his irritation, he breaks gazes with Hannibal, sighing heavily, and rests his elbows on the table, one hand running over his mouth and settling beneath his chin. His eyes gravitate to the ring of antlers and horns adorning Hannibal's mantle, framing that graphic picture of *Leda and the Swan*. He huffs.

He can feel, in his head, Hannibal's wolf nosing curiously at the edges of his thoughts, seeking to be let in. His and Hannibal's relationship has not grown in carnality since the night Will put him under his thrall, since they both agreed to belong only to each other. Yes, Hannibal calls Will his mate, and Will knows Hannibal is his, no matter what lack of bite marks and sex might say otherwise, but Will has shied away from doing more, too aware of his own comparative strength and violent inclinations, too aware of how easy it would be to put Hannibal back in his thrall and overtake his psyche to the point where Hannibal is more like a slave to his whim than a partner and fierce creature in his own right.

But Hannibal has made a home for himself on the borders of Will's mind, and will not be beaten back so easily. It is almost as though he craves that level of connection, that dependence, panting and pawing at the door like a dog whining for scraps from the dinner table.

Will sighs, closing his eyes, and rubs his hand over his face, up through his hair. "I'll come," he murmurs, and hears Hannibal give a happy little purr in answer. He looks over to find Hannibal smiling, thoroughly pleased at Will's surrender. "But I mean it, Hannibal – I'm not a pawn for whatever political shit you're trying to pull."

"Of course not, darling," Hannibal replies, his smile widening. He sits forward and takes Will's free hand, lacing their fingers together. "I would never dream of reducing what you are to me to something as plebian as a social ploy. You are mine, and you would be mine if you were a wolf, or a human, or some other creature we have not yet discovered."

Will's lips twitch in a smile. "It's really hard to be annoyed with you when you say shit like that."

"I know," Hannibal says, bright with humor. He kisses Will's hand, nuzzles over where his pulse is still and silent, and lets Will's hand go once he's finished marking the exposed skin with his scent. "Now, would you like some dessert?"

Will is not in a good mood, and that is why he arrives early to Hannibal's home on the night the dinner party is meant to happen. If Hannibal cannot settle him and gentle his teeth, he will excuse himself and leave before any of his guests arrive – he is not fool enough to think, however, that his best chance of being soothed doesn't lie within Hannibal's too-neat home and in the presence of his welcoming smile and warm scent. They are mated, when all's said and done, and so in times of great stress, Will's instincts call for the presence of his companion, in the hopes that he can find solace there.

He winces at the sting of sunlight that slants down upon him, wrapping his gloved hands on either side of his face since, in his haste to get out of the university building, he left his sunglasses behind. Most of the drive up North is mercifully wooded, and as he approached suburbia the tall houses had given him enough shade that he can see, but there is a slip of uninterrupted light on Hannibal's sidewalk, and he ducks and rushes through it quickly, hissing at the sting of gathering burns on his forehead and the tip of his nose.

He breathes a sigh of relief under the shade of the little awning, and knocks on the door. Hannibal gave him a key, though Will doubts he ever actually locks his home. An apex predator such as him doesn't care about intruders. Still, it's polite to knock first, especially since he's not expected for a few hours.

He hears a shuffling from inside, and then the door opens. Hannibal blinks in surprise, but it quickly melts into one of those familiar, welcoming smiles he seems to only hold for Will. He's clearly been cooking, his white button-down shirt rolled up to the elbows, the scent of grease and flour hanging around him like a fog, but every inch of him is pristine and untouched. Too clean. Will wants to make a mess of him.

"Hey," he murmurs, and steps in when Hannibal gives him space. Hannibal takes his coat, as he always does, and hangs it while Will sheds his gloves and scarf from around his neck and mouth. "Sorry, I know I'm early, I just -."

He goes silent, as Hannibal turns him, frowning at the red marks on Will's forehead and nose. His eyes are dark with worry, and he gently flattens a hand over Will's stinging skin, and leans in to rub their noses together. Will sighs, and closes his eyes, allowing Hannibal's scent to calm him, to fill his lungs and pool around his heart and the back of his throat.

"You're always welcome here, Will," Hannibal murmurs, his warm, gentle hand pushing up beneath Will's hair, as though checking his temperature. Will knows the sunburn will fade quickly, but Hannibal's worry for him is nice. It's nice to be the subject of someone's loving concern. "Would you like something to eat?"

Will shakes his head. He'd been so stressed and unwilling to potentially interrupt Hannibal's routine that he'd snagged a blood bag from one of the stores he keeps in his office – Government sanctioned, of course, to 'keep the leech in line' – and he'd drank it on the way up, so he's well-fed and, while always hungry, not at risk of it distracting him.

He swallows, and lets out a pitiful little noise when Hannibal pulls back from him. Always so tactile, Hannibal cups his face, brushes his thumbs over Will's cheeks, down his jaw, cradling his ears and then down his neck. It's an instinct to scent-mark, something that must be driving Hannibal mad since he cannot permanently mark Will's neck. Maybe one day, if Will's venom corrupts him enough.

Hannibal eyes him, and tilts his head. "What's wrong?"

Will sighs. Though Hannibal cannot read his thoughts like Will can when he gets his teeth in Hannibal's neck, he must be able to feel certain pulses of emotion consistent with a typical bonding. Will has no idea what it feels like for wolves – or, really, for his own species – but if

he can feel Hannibal's presence in his mind, it's not impossible to think Hannibal is aware of him on some level.

He wants to tell Hannibal. He wants to say that he's not sure he can go through with this, that he's on-edge and not feeling particularly friendly. Wants to demand that they just belong only to each other, that they can go hunt and kill at their leisure and fuck all these societal politics and this pack dynamic drama. He wants to explain that the day had been rough, and worn him down, and that he just wants to take Hannibal away and never have to deal with anyone else ever again.

He doesn't. Merely wets his lips, and tells another, different truth; "I missed you," he murmurs. It's a vulnerable thing to admit, exposing his belly and neck to such a predator. Hannibal is capable of cruelty and kindness in equal measure, and Will is no weak creature himself, but it's difficult to feel strong when so many people are so rigidly against him every single Goddamn day.

But Hannibal smiles – it's a wide, fond expression, so sincerely happy that Will doesn't regret admitting weakness, if it gets Hannibal to smile at him like that. Hannibal's hands tighten on his neck and he leans in, claiming Will's mouth in a passionate kiss that might have lasted for centuries, for how breathless Will is when it ends.

"I missed you too, darling," he replies, a soft rumble in his throat that makes his voice low and rough. He nuzzles Will, their noses brushing again, the burn on Will's already faded, and threads his fingers through Will's messy hair, cupping his skull and pressing in until their chests collide.

Will smiles, and tilts his head up for another kiss, smoothing his hands down Hannibal's flanks until they settle at his waist, simply enjoying Hannibal's heat and strength pressed against him. When the kiss ends, he ducks his head and brushes his nose over Hannibal's neck, pleased to find that the unbuttoned collar of his shirt means Will can find the bite marks he's placed over the course of their time together.

He sighs, closing his eyes as Hannibal pets him, content to let Will breathe in his scent and nose at his pulse. Then, Will pulls away, and gives Hannibal a sheepish smile. "Come on," he murmurs, and takes Hannibal's hand, leading him back to his kitchen. The scent of food is overwhelming in here, and there's a veritable horde of pots, pans, cutting boards piled high with diced vegetables and slices of meat ready to be cooked.

Will presses his lips together and releases Hannibal, coming to a halt on the other side of the island while Hannibal takes up his station in front of the oven, opening it to another thin cloud of steam and the smell of something sweet, and starchy. Will's nostrils flare.

"What are you making?" Will asks.

Hannibal smiles at him, and closes the oven, dusting off his hands. "Wolves are not exactly known for their small appetites," he says lightly. There's a pot of boiling stock on the stove, into which he scoops up and drops a handful of cubed carrots. "In total, including you and myself, there will be eight people. So I'm preparing somewhat of a feast."

Will's brows lift, and he looks at the vast array of pre-prepared food laid out in front of them. Hannibal seems content to let him stand in silence, and Will watches him spray down a pan and coat it with flour, before laying out what looks like chicken breast cutlets on top of it and covering the top edges with more flour, and a dusting from a bowl of red spices. His nostrils flare again – none of the scents make him hungry, for there is a curious lack of bloody meat on display, and he has no appetite for 'normal' food.

Hannibal catches his eyes, and smiles. "Don't worry, Will, there will be plenty for you to enjoy as well."

"I didn't say anything," Will replies, lifting his chin.

Hannibal's smile widens. His head tilts. "You're in a defensive mood," he notes, neither a scold nor praise in his voice. Still, Will feels reprimanded. If he had the blood to spare, he would blush. Sighing, he bites his lower lip and looks down at his hands, folding them and resting his forearms on the island.

"I'm trying not to be," he replies after a while, and bows his head so he can rake his fingers through his hair. "I'm sorry. It's just…been a long day." A long year. A long afterlife.

Hannibal is silent, and Will lifts his head when he hears water rushing, as Hannibal washes his hands. He turns off the faucet and dries them, and then approaches Will, taking him by the hair and tugging him upright. His thumb brushes Will's forehead, which has now been healed from the tender burn, and Will swallows as the fingers of Hannibal's other hand splay wide across his throat.

"Would you like to talk about it?" he asks. Always aware, always asking. Will clears his throat and shakes his head, because all the things that plague him are things Hannibal cannot fix, and it would be cruel to make him feel guilty about something that is, in the end, Will's choice.

He doesn't have to stay, if he doesn't want to. But he wants to be near Hannibal, and that means seeing this through.

"I think I'll take something to drink now, if you have it," he murmurs instead.

Hannibal nods, his eyes still clinging to that considering darkness, but he goes to the wine cabinet and pulls out a dark, unlabeled bottle. His hands are practiced and efficient as he unthreads the cap and uncorks the wine, and Will's nostrils flare again as he's greeted with a much more enticing scent – Hannibal has started to put his own blood in the wine, and Will knows this is one such bottle, thickly-laced and syrupy with his mate's life.

He pours a glass for Will through an aerator, and Will takes it when offered, with a grateful smile. Hannibal leaves the bottle near Will, on the kitchen island, and returns to his task of making food.

Will takes a long drink, unable to stop the forceful purr that escapes him at the taste of his mate in the wine. Hannibal's blood is a sweet decadence, and as Will has been feeding him

venom during their little experiment, he's become sweeter, sharper, like a thick candied glaze on a strip of meat. Maple on bacon, honey on ham; smoky and full-bodied and delicious.

This particular bottle compliments his flavor well, and tastes more like whiskey than wine. He sees, half-hidden as he moves, Hannibal's lips twitch into a smile as Will makes another soft sound of pleasure, and takes another drink.

"How was your day?" he offers, for just because he doesn't want to talk about his day doesn't mean he would force Hannibal into silence. Hannibal is a talkative man, appreciating good conversation as much as quiet.

"Uneventful," Hannibal replies with a shrug. "I held the usual appointments for my patients, none of them particularly diverting." He pauses, and gives Will a brief look, before he adds; "Agent Crawford also paid me a visit."

Will frowns, his fingers tightening around the delicate stem of his glass. He is careful not to break it, but it's a close thing. "Oh?"

Hannibal hums, checking the oven again, before he twists one of the dials and closes it once more. His next task, it seems, is one of baking bread. There's a ball of dough in a bowl on the kitchen island, and he sprinkles flour onto a bare patch of surface, and takes a rolling pin, flattening it out.

"He wanted an update on your mental state," Hannibal tells him. Will had hoped, foolish though it might be, that the wolves simply liked to hang out together. It would have been more welcome an idea, though he doesn't think, if Hannibal pretended that was the case, he would have believed him. "I think he has a new case for you, and would like your insight, but sought my opinion before approaching you."

Will's upper lip twitches, and he sets his glass down because he will break it if he doesn't. "And?" he rasps.

"I told him you were of sound mind and body, but that if he sought to get your counsel or help, he should ask you directly," Hannibal replies lightly, a smile tugging at the corners of his mouth when he meets Will's eyes. "I have no interest in being your prison guard."

It's a nice sentiment, but just reminds Will that that is exactly what Hannibal is; the leash-holder, the one separating the well-meaning and 'good' members of society from the rabid leech that killed his first suspect and almost killed the latest victim in a fit of bloodlust. There's a sour taste in his mouth, and he swallows it back, looking down at Hannibal's hands as he smooths more flour down the rolling pin and spreads the dough another inch in all directions.

His fingers curl, and he says; "Jack came to see me today." Hannibal hums – he probably expected that. "Showed me a crime scene. Asked me to look at it properly tomorrow."

"He trusts your judgement, Will," Hannibal tells him, his voice quiet and kind. "Despite what social prejudices he might hold, you are an asset to him, and he would do well to remember that."

"I'm an asset in the same way a grenade is," he spits. "Jack looks at me and thinks someone has already pulled the pin."

Hannibal's lips purse, and he shakes his head. "I don’t think that's the case."

"I'm not interested in hearing you defend Jack, if that's where you're going with this," Will snaps, and immediately regrets it. He rubs a hand over his mouth; his teeth ache from the wine, his mouth is flooded with venom. Being around Hannibal makes him feel sharp and prickly all over, like jagged glass, just waiting to cut.

Hannibal eyes him, his gaze as heavy as the sun, and makes Will feel like he's being burned. Hannibal's disapproval is obvious, drags along his shoulders like nails, and he shakes his head and sighs heavily again. "I should go," he murmurs. "I'm not going to be good company and I don't want to put you in a bad mood."

He almost expects Hannibal to argue, but Hannibal has always prioritized Will's freedom of choice when he can help it. He sighs, and abandons his work, dusting his hands off and circling the island so he can gently cup Will's face.

"You are welcome back, if you change your mind," he promises, and Will nods, closing his eyes as their foreheads touch. He presses his lips together and touches Hannibal's jaw, tilts his head up so their noses brush, and then pulls away, heading for the door. Hannibal follows him, and helps Will into his coat, and Will can smell his disappointment and low-grade unhappiness that Will has chosen, in the end, to leave, but he's in no mood to be around so many wolves.

He turns and meets Hannibal's eyes, sighs heavily again, and forces himself to smile. "I'll see you soon," he says, and Hannibal nods. He kisses Will, chaste, lips barely brushing his temple, and Will opens the door and leaves without another word, pulling his hood up tight over his face to shield himself from the sun.

He's just finished a bottle of his favorite cheap whiskey when he feels a pulse of awareness from the shadow in his mind he associates with Hannibal. His guests have arrived; Will can feel his mate's demeanor turn towards them, like watching a wolf's ears perk up and his intelligent eyes settling on the tree line. He sighs to himself – the less blood he has in him, the more easily drunk he gets, and he's definitely not in a state to be driving or doing much of anything, except sit and wallow in his own misery.

It's a Goddamn cliché. All he needs is the castle and organ music and he's no better than the stereotype.

He takes out his phone, brushing his thumb along the screen before he unlocks it, pulling up Hannibal's and his text message chain. The last one was from two hours ago, telling Hannibal he'd gotten home safely, since it's polite to inform one's mate of such things and he hadn't wanted to just give Hannibal radio silence when they're both so obviously upset.

Hannibal had replied a moment later, with a message of thanks and wishing him a good night, like he'd just been waiting for Will to text him.

He sighs, and before he can think better of it, types out; "I'm sorry."

A moment later; "I miss you."

In his head, he sees the wolf's ears swivel back towards him. Feels Hannibal's attention draw away from the tree line and back in his direction.

His phone chimes, and he blinks down at the message:

"I miss you too, darling. Are you going to come join us?"

Will huffs. "Too drunk to drive."

A soft pulse of acknowledgement comes, and Will closes his eyes, tipping his head back, and blinks up at the ceiling. Stupid, it was stupid of him to leave. He rubs both hands over his face and paws at his phone as it chimes again.

"I could come get you."

Will raises a brow. "That's like a two hour round trip, not including traffic. That's insane."

"It would be worth it, to be in your company."

Will's lips twitch in a smile. He sighs, and rolls onto his side, tucking his free arm under his pillow as he stares at Hannibal's texts. Another cliché, rereading the messages like a lovesick teenager. It's not an unwelcome feeling, but it brings with it a sharp ache in his chest. A mating bond is never something he considered before, especially after he was turned; it's too easy to get inside someone's head, and now that he can enthrall, it's been debased down to the level of perversion and a means to feed. But he *wants* Hannibal in his head, he likes him being there. He likes when he drinks from Hannibal's neck and feels how much Hannibal adores him in return.

His mouth is dry, and his belly clenches sharply with hunger. Always hungry, never satisfied – only when he's with Hannibal does he even come close. It's that thought that makes him rise from his bed, rolling his shoulders, and he goes upstairs to where Hannibal has been leaving fancier clothes for him.

He showers, first, though he's sure by the end of his journey it will be a moot point. Once out, he dresses in one of the nice suits Hannibal bought for him – the jacket is a dark purple, almost black, a color that he knows will highlight any threads of red in his eyes, as well as the natural blue. The shirt is black, as well as the matching suit pants, and he dons them all quickly, keeping the collar open and loose though there's no bite to display.

He puts on his shoes, and checks that all his dogs have been watered and don't need to go outside, before he leaves his house. There are no more messages on his phone, but that's alright. He's in no condition to drive, but that's alright too.

Even as foggy as his head is, he can still run, and a vampire's speed has certainly never been sensationalized. At a sprint, Will can run a mile in less than two minutes, and he runs the risk of getting hungry before he gets tired.

He trots down his porch steps, and breathes in the cold, humid air. Sets his sights northeast, and takes off running.

He's windswept, and panting more out of habit than anything else as he slows at the end of Hannibal's street. Hannibal's home sits nestled halfway down, the lights shining like a beacon calling Will home. He swallows, and wishes he had taken the time to stop at a wine store or some other place he could bring an offering, but he had no thought except getting to his mate, and is reluctant to turn back now.

He wipes the back of his hand over his mouth and spits an overabundance of venom at his feet, combing his hands through his hair to try and calm it down from the wild tangle of curls it had dried into as he ran. He's not sweating, his heart is stone-still, and yet if he were human, it would be racing from nerves.

The air stinks of wolf, finery and exotic perfumes clogging his lungs as he walks slowly down the pathway towards Hannibal's house. His sensitive ears can pick up laughter and soft music coming from inside, and he takes a single additional moment to straighten his jacket and make sure he didn't get mud on his shoes, before he walks up to the door.

He debates knocking, but decides against it, and lets himself in. The cacophony of laughter that greets him makes him wince, he tenses his shoulders and silently lets the door close behind him, so quietly even the wolves' hearing won't pick it up. Hannibal's house extends by a hallway, stairs on the right leading up after the closet, and there are two doors on the other side, past a bathroom. One leads to the kitchen, which he can see is dimly-lit. The second, straight ahead, leads to the dining room. The air in that room is golden and bright, and though the fog of alcohol has cleared from his head for the most part, he can tell it will hurt his eyes to step right into it without warning. That, and the smell of mortal food and wolves is nauseating – Hannibal's scent has never bothered him, for its smoky sweetness, but it's clear some of his guests prefer to disguise their natural scent with overly-floral perfumes that he imagines must be pleasant enough to them, but sting his own nose terribly.

He nods to himself, and prowls on silent feet into the kitchen. It's empty, as he'd hoped it would be. The bottle of his wine is where he left it, sealed over, and he goes to it, unwrapping the cover and pouring himself a glass. He breathes in Hannibal's scent, drowns in his mate's blood as he takes a drink, and feels a little better after the first mouthful.

There is a lull in the conversation in the other room – another door separates the kitchen from the dining room, but it is mostly closed, presumably so Hannibal's guests do not see him moving around and preparing their various courses. The mess of ingredients from before has all been cleared away; what remains is a single, artfully decorated dessert, that looks like flan

for all Will remembers about human food. He goes to it, gives it a cursory sniff only to confirm there's nothing in there to appeal to him, and instead opens the fridge.

He blinks at the contents. There is a single plate, alone on a shelf, covered with Clingfilm. On it is raw meat, sitting in a thick moat of blood and juice. He knows it was meant for him, and his chest floods with warmth at the sight of it, the reminder that, despite all his performance, Hannibal *did* intend for him to be well-fed here.

He closes the fridge door, and turns, eyeing the half-closed door leading to the dining room. He walks over to it, but does not pass through, content to lean against the wall and sip at his wine, peering through the crack. There are seven wolves in all, including Hannibal. They are all dressed to the nines, wearing finery Will is sure would make him nauseous if he knew the price tag. Hannibal sits at the head of the table, angled so that Will can only see the side of his face, from where he's standing. To his right is another male wolf, older, greyed-out and wrinkled with deep smile lines around his mouth. To Hannibal's left is a woman, golden-haired and reeking of sweet flowers, wearing a dress that hugs her arms and leaves her shoulders bare.

He sips his wine, eyeing the other guests; another woman flanks the first, with short-cropped black hair and a wide, gummy smile, pearls beaded like water around her neck. The man on her other side is dark-skinned and sits like there's a pole making up his spine, stoic as he absently sips at his wine. Across from him is someone who looks closer to Will's turned age, with a round face and hair gelled mercilessly into a careful coif, though Will can tell that it's naturally much more like his. He looks the least comfortable for being there, fidgeting at his utensils, his mouth moving in half-formed breaths like he's trying to come up with something to say. The final guest is another woman. Will's nostrils flare. Half-breed, he realizes, catching the scent he assumes is hers. She's the only one not wearing some kind of cologne or similarly musky perfume.

Will watches, as the oldest man sighs and looks to the conspicuously empty place setting at the other end of the table. "It's a shame our final guest could not join us," he says, in that disapprovingly polite way that makes Will think of Regency Europe. The kind of talk where a gasp of concern is meant more as an insult.

Hannibal's lips tilt down, a subtly unhappy shine in his eyes, and he replies quietly; "Quite a shame. But his work is unpredictable. I hope we will find another occasion to gather in the near future."

Will smiles into his glass.

"I'm sure he is above reproach," the golden-haired woman says, with a warm smile sent Hannibal's way. Will's fingers curl, and he fights the urge to hiss at her from the shadows like some disgruntled housecat.

Hannibal nods, almost absently, and lets out his breath, pushing himself to his feet. "I hope there's some room left," he says with a teasing smile. "I'll return with dessert shortly."

Will pulls back, pressing his lips together as he considers his next option. He could hide, could go upstairs and simply wait. He could leave again. He could stay right where he is and

let Hannibal find him, apologize and kiss him and try to bear the rest of the night as his perfect mate, try to trick his guests past seeing him for what he is.

Or, he thinks, with a growing smile, a flash of anticipation, he could *make* them see who he is. Make them understand who, exactly, Hannibal chose as his mate, who earned the right to put his teeth in Hannibal's neck, the man to whom Hannibal eagerly surrendered himself.

It's an enticing thought – not to play into the politics, but disregard them completely.

He hurries to the fridge and takes out his plate. He has no need to warm it. The place setting that was laid for him already has utensils, so he strips the Clingfilm off it and tosses it in a wad into the trash can, grabs his bottle of wine and glass, and slinks out through the door to the hallway as the door from the dining room opens and Hannibal steps in.

He enters the dining room, and the wolves perk up at his arrival. He gives them a wide, falsely sheepish smile, and takes his seat, setting his plate down, his wine and glass beside it. "Good evening everyone," he greets, and gives them a nod like this is a commonplace occurrence. "So sorry I'm late."

On his right, the nervous little round-faced wolf gapes at him. The dark-skinned wolf on his left tilts his head and lifts his chin.

"It's no trouble…?" His voice is low, accented in that blue blood Baltimore way. Will smiles at him.

"Will Graham," he says, and sees recognition of his name flash across the wolves. He heard enough to assume they would know him by name. The oldest man lets out a little startled rumble of displeasure, as he comes to realize that Will is the one Hannibal was expecting. His mate. A leech.

He hums to himself, and sips his wine. He refuses to let their stares bother him, brushes them off like water from a duck's back, and takes his knife and fork in hand, slicing through the cold meat and taking a bite. It's wolf, and he wonders if they can tell. What they might do if they find out.

The door opens again, and the golden-haired woman turns in her seat to look at Hannibal, and clears her throat. "Will's here," she stage-whispers, urgently, as though thinking Hannibal might flinch and throw him out.

Hannibal freezes in place, and Will meets his eyes, sees them flash with a surprised, joyful light. His face melts into a wide, welcoming smile, and he sets down the tray holding the flan and little dessert plates, as though they mean nothing to him. He circles the table and Will lifts his hand, taking Hannibal's in his own and drawing his knuckles to his lips for a kiss.

"I'm sorry I took so long," he murmurs. He turns his head and nips at the meat of Hannibal's thumb, just enough to prick his skin, and licks the beading drop of blood from it to a nervous chorus of gasps. Hannibal's joy floods him like light, his smile so happy, his scent so thick with relief and adoration Will is sure every wolf gathered can smell it.

Hannibal purrs loudly, nuzzling his hair, and cups Will's chin so he can kiss his forehead. "You're here now," he murmurs, and Will smiles, and nods. He lets Hannibal's hand go and Hannibal leaves him, albeit reluctantly, to return to the dessert.

"Would anyone like a piece?"

"I'm sorry," the older man says, his eyes narrowed and gesturing towards Will. "Forgive me, but -."

"I'd advise you to choose your next words very carefully, Greyson," Hannibal interrupts, brows lifted, voice markedly calm as he slices a piece of the flan and sets it on a plate. "If anyone is uncomfortable, they are more than welcome to leave. If you mean to say anything inflammatory, then I would rather you left beforehand."

He offers the plate to Greyson, and the man stares at him for a long time, before he shakes his head and stands, gesturing for the woman at his side to do the same.

"Thank you for dinner, Hannibal," he says with a tight smile, bows his head, and Hannibal returns the nod, cordial but lacking warmth. Greyson and the woman Will assumes is his mate circle the table, giving him a wide berth, and Will huffs a laugh as he hears the front door close behind them.

"Anyone else?" Hannibal asks in the wake of the tense silence.

The dark-skinned wolf beside Will laughs. "Oh, I couldn't possibly leave now," he purrs. "This became so much more interesting."

Will's brows lift, and he sets his knife down to offer his hand, pleased when the wolf takes it without hesitation. There are calluses on his fingertips and his palm is warm and dry. No elevated heart rate, no fear. "I didn't catch your name," he says.

"Tobias Budge," the wolf replies with another wide smile. "It's a pleasure to meet you, Mister Graham."

Hannibal smiles, and gives Tobias the first piece – a gesture of reward for good behavior, Will knows that's what it's for. Hannibal dishes out the rest of the dessert, as it seems none of the other guests seem inclined to leave, and then he meets Will's eyes.

Will tilts his head, and stands, gathering his plate and his wine. He goes to the right-hand seat where Greyson was, and takes his spot, smiling when he earns another flash of pleasure in Hannibal's dark eyes.

The golden-haired woman across from him stares openly, her delicate throat flexing as she swallows, her face turned remarkably pale beneath her makeup. She looks closer to Hannibal's age than Will's, and if Will didn't know any better he'd say she, too, came from an ancient bloodline that gifts their descendants with extended youth.

"So, Will," the round-faced wolf says nervously, and almost flinches when Will looks at him. He's clearly nervous, but trying to be friendly, and Will can forgive him a little ingrained

prejudice, just because his fear smells rather pleasant. "How long have you and Hannibal known each other?"

"A few months," Will replies with a smile, turning his attention back to his steak. The meat came from a powerful wolf; he can taste the spice of youth and flavorful strength in it as he runs the meat through its own blood and swallows it down.

"So little time," Tobias notes.

Hannibal hums, smiling. "I was taken by him immediately," he says, proclaiming it openly. He nods to the woman at his side. "Surely you can understand, Bedelia – if I recall correctly you and your mate bonded within a week."

"It's true," Bedelia answers, her smile a little more genuine at the mention of her mate. Will doesn't see any bite on her neck, but perhaps she is the kind of woman who'd rather keep such marks private. Will smiles in answer.

"Perhaps one day Cupid will strike you so, Tobias, and you'll be as hopeless as the rest of us," Hannibal teases, earning another laugh.

"Heaven forbid," Tobias replies, and turns his attention to the dessert. They fall into a companionable silence, and beneath the table, Will touches his knee to his mate's, and smiles when he hears, in answer, Hannibal purring loudly.

Dinner stretches on for several more hours, since they are all species who can survive off little sleep, and prefer the night. Bedelia is the last to leave, and even goes so far as to shake Will's hand and say it was a pleasure meeting him, before she leaves, and Hannibal closes the door behind her.

Will breathes out, and runs a hand through his hair, smiling when Hannibal immediately plasters himself to his side, purring and nuzzling Will's bared neck openly.

"I'm glad I came back," he says, turning and nudging his nose to Hannibal's hair, giving a huff of complaint when he's met with gel and the scent of product instead of his mate's natural musk. "I'm sorry about Greyson."

"I'm not; he's an insufferable man," Hannibal replies, and cups Will's face, kissing him deeply. Will growls against his mouth, turning so their chests press together and he can feel Hannibal's heat soaking through their clothes. In his head, Hannibal's wolf ruts up against him the same way, rumbling with pleasure, fur ruffled and tail wagging in happy excitement.

Will parts from the kiss with a smile, and meets Hannibal's eyes. "Do you want me to go home?" he asks. "Or should I stay?"

Hannibal's upper lip twitches, showing his teeth, and he grips Will tightly like he might simply disappear if Hannibal doesn't. "Stay," he commands, implores. He leans in and kisses

Will's jaw, down his sensitive neck, and Will's lashes dip low, he smiles and runs a hand up Hannibal's back. "Stay, darling."

Will nods. "I hate how you smell right now," he says, and Hannibal pulls back, head tilting. "All put together…. Not like yourself. Not like *me*."

"An easy thing to change," Hannibal replies. Full as he is, warmed as he is, Will feels his heart flutter in his neck, feels it burst and beat against Hannibal's mouth as his neck is kissed again. He growls, tightens his grip, and pushes Hannibal towards the stairs.

Hannibal goes eagerly, graceful and easy, so in-control. Will wants to make a mess of him; dirty him up and mark him all over. See how Hannibal tries to piece himself back together after Will has been inside him and torn him to shreds.

He snarls, and lunges for Hannibal, sending them both through his bedroom door, the wood swinging on its hinges and hitting the back wall with a sharp *crack*. He bites at his mate's neck, raising welting marks from his teeth that do not draw blood, but darken Hannibal's flushed skin, turn it into a mottled mix of red and purple. His hands are strong and determined, tugging at fabric until seams rip and buttons come loose, until Hannibal's hands catch his wrists and grip him tightly, forcing him to go still.

Hannibal laughs, and kisses Will's curled knuckles. One of his shoulders is bared from his shirt, the tails untucked and hanging, there's a hole in the side of his suit pants from one of Will's swipes. Will breathes out heavily, curls his upper lip back, meets his eyes and finds Hannibal staring back, pupils wide. It's an open chasm, an unending void, and oh, it would be so easily for Will to push himself into that space, like he might melt into Hannibal's arms or warm himself between Hannibal's thighs. His mind is like a ravine, and Will in the center, digging every furrow deeper and deeper in preparation for the flood.

His mouth fills with venom, and he shows Hannibal his fangs. "Let me in," he purrs, and Hannibal's pupils grow another fraction wider, his nostrils flare, his eyelids grow heavy and his lips part as he succumbs to Will's thrall. He releases Will's hands, and Will presses close, nudges his nose against his mate's, tastes the sweet dessert and the wine and the meat in his exhale and slides his lips, a gentle brush that's only skin, around another chasm of air, against Hannibal's – a tease of a kiss he does not let Hannibal complete.

He shushes Hannibal, when the wolf growls at him, a flare of his golden-eyed animal in his iris. Will's hands lift, settle, slide through his hair, combing it free of the proper do, teasing sweat-damp fringe forward across his face, making the ends crimp and curl around his fingers. Touches, feather-light, along his mate's nape and smiles when Hannibal shivers in answer.

"Let me in," he says again, and Hannibal lets out a soft, wanting sound. Will tilts his head, drags the tips of his fangs over Hannibal's thundering pulse, finds where his jugular holds thick, oxygen-deprived blood, and bites.

His teeth split skin easily and Hannibal moans, one arm curling over Will's and clawing at his back, like he intends to push Will to the ground. Will closes his eyes, groans around his

mouthful, careful not to jostle or knead so Hannibal doesn't lose too much blood. But oh, *fuck*, he tastes good – he's well-fed and happy and tastes so fucking *good*.

Hannibal's thoughts flood down the ravine of his own mind, taking Will up in his current and Will sees it, feels it all; feels Hannibal's devotion, his adoration, his simple animal joy at having his mate in his arms; his pride, at being able to keep Will fed and happy; his eagerness, a soft answering echo of 'Yes, yes, come in' that seems to swim at Will like shining fish in the water. Hannibal will welcome him – into his home, his mind, his body. His skin parts so readily for Will's teeth, his thoughts for Will's bite. His blood rushes to flood Will's mouth in return, and he encases and pulls Will out to drown.

Will moans loudly, laps at Hannibal's neck with broad, uncoordinated swipes of his tongue, claws at his clothes and growls when he feels Hannibal, hot and hard and eager against him. Another flash splits him in two; fierce lust, intense, agonized longing. Wolves have high sex drives, that's no secret – one of those things human housewives titter about – and Hannibal is tactile all on his own, always has been, as long as Will's known him. Will's imposed chastity now feels more like torture than necessity.

"I'm sorry," he whines, pawing at his mate's nape, kissing him, kissing because he'll die all over again if he doesn't. Hannibal embraces him, turns him, presses him flat on the bed and Will clings, kisses, licks over his bloodied neck and shoves at his own clothes as best he can when Hannibal prowls over him. "I'm sorry."

Hannibal pauses, cups Will's nape, rises above him so their eyes can meet. "What are you sorry for?" he murmurs, his voice slower than normal, like it's taking a great effort for him to make his tongue and lips form the words. Will pushed too hard, dug too deep.

He swallows, presses his lips together, slides his hands up Hannibal's strong arms and flattens them on his chest, over his racing heart. The hair there is sweat-soft, like fur, and he resists the urge to arch up and rub himself all against it.

He wants to apologize, for letting his desire and his instincts get the better of him, invading Hannibal's mind right now and diving so deeply. He wants to apologize for leaving, for getting drunk and stupid and sentimental. He wants to beg for forgiveness, after weeks of denying Hannibal the wolf's rightful claim over his mate's body, for only letting himself take up space in Hannibal's bed, but never warm it.

But he can't say any of that – even if Hannibal were alert enough to really absorb it, Will himself is too deep, wrapped in Hannibal's happiness, his relief, his love, it's impossible to bring it up now. So, just like before, he leans up and kisses lightly at Hannibal's jaw, and says a different truth; "For making you wait." And whether Hannibal thinks he means dinner, or this, he can't be certain, because all Hannibal does is tighten his grip and kiss him so fiercely that Will's head fills with fog.

Maybe wolves have some kind of enthralling power of their own, because Will doesn't remember shedding his clothes, or helping Hannibal shed his, but then Hannibal is there, between his thighs, big and warm and shining with sweat, panting so heavily their mouths can't seal around a kiss. Will groans, his own chest tight with his hammering heart, his hands

spread flat and wide on Hannibal's back, and he digs in with his heels and arches, grinding shamelessly against Hannibal's stomach.

Between his thighs, he feels Hannibal's thick cock, leaking wet and slicking the skin along the base of his own. Will reaches down, wraps his fingers around it gently, smiling when Hannibal's entire body rolls into the sensation, and he grips Will's hair fiercely and pulls his head back, making him bare his throat. Will knows what comes next, because Hannibal does it every night he can.

Hannibal's teeth split his skin with ease and Will gasps, arching, his free hand clawing at Hannibal's chest and dragging through the hair there. Hannibal snarls against his flesh, locks his jaws like a fighting dog, and one of his hands spreads wide over Will's mouth, so he can't bite back.

Will doesn't fear being suffocated, but he growls all the same, licks Hannibal's palm and shivers as Hannibal jerks at his neck, threatening to take his pound of flesh straight from Will's throat. Even then, his thoughts are awash with devotion and love, Will can feel how much he likes biting Will back, soaking his tongue in old blood and fresh venom, eagerly drinking it down.

He parts when he has to breathe and Will meets him, smears the blood on their jaws together, and then, with a strength he rarely uses, but finds with Hannibal he needs a lot of, he flips them, forcing Hannibal onto his back on the bed.

Hannibal can't tear him, he doesn't need to worry about bleeding, forcing too much too fast. He straddles Hannibal's hips, spits venom onto his hand and works it over the head of Hannibal's leaking cock. Hannibal groans, tipping his head back, showing his marred throat, and Will smiles, wide and sharp, and lifts up so he can sink onto Hannibal's cock and take him all in in one smooth stroke.

"*Will*." His name escapes like a cry to God, as Hannibal rears up and claws at his back, sharp nails digging into his fever-warm skin. Will snaps his teeth together, presses them to Hannibal's shoulder, nails scraping through Hannibal's hair hard enough he knows it hurts. In his head, and escaping Hannibal's blood-slick mouth, he hears his name again; "Will, *Will*…"

Hannibal fills him up so nicely, better than blood, better than meat. Will is ravenous, snarling, a heat building up behind his eyes that demands he take and take until there's nothing left for the wolf to give. He sinks his hands through fur and flesh, rips at skin and bites, bites hard, until he feels bone beneath his teeth.

Hannibal snarls at him, grips his hips tightly and throws him off, so Will lands heavy on the bed. He rolls to his belly and gasps as Hannibal flattens a hand on his nape, digs in tightly, and forces his thighs apart, pushing back inside him so suddenly Will howls, grabbing the blankets. It burns, but it's a good kind of burn, overtakes him like the change did, his muscles singing with vitality and his heart racing, flying. Hannibal moves his hand and bites the back of his neck, hobbling him, holding him by the hips as he starts a brutal pace inside Will's body.

"*Fuck*," Will growls, settled by the undeniable proof of how strong his mate is. Hannibal is so warm, covering him and pressing flat, forcing Will to simply lie there and take it. Will turns his head and bites his jaw when Hannibal releases his nape and covers him, his fangs flooded with venom that he feels sinking into Hannibal's skin, lighting his nerves on fire and coloring his blood. He paws at Hannibal's neck, keeping him still as Hannibal fucks him, hard enough the bed creaks and groans beneath their shifting weight.

Hannibal growls, and pulls back, rubbing his hand over his mouth and slipping from Will, rolling him onto his back again. He wets his cock with blood and venom, shoves Will's thighs wide open, and lifts him up into his next thrust, and Will moans loudly, back bowing upwards sharply to get the angle he likes. Hannibal looks wild, so far removed from the man who had hosted dinner and always seems so in control – he's a beast, nothing more than a primal animal, a slave to the most basic needs Will can conjure in him. Will did that, he made Hannibal look like that, and he's alight with pride and pleasure, watching his mate as Hannibal fucks him, driving in deep and panting like he was the one who ran miles to be with Will tonight.

Will drags his hands flat over Hannibal's flushed chest, down to his belly, outwards to grip his hips. "You're mine," he whispers, and Hannibal gives a helpless nod, nostrils flared wide and jaw slack, lashes fluttering like he wants to keep his eyes open but can't help himself. Will smiles, pricks Hannibal's skin with his nails and spits on his fingers so he can coat the wounds with more venom. It helps with pain, but it also makes Hannibal strong, heightens the visceral pleasure of killing and fucking and whatever other thoughts Will wants to put in his head. "Say it."

"I am," Hannibal breathes, and collapses over him, nuzzling his bitten neck even as it starts to heal. He bites down again, snarls when Will clenches up around his cock in answer. Hannibal's fingers curl in his hair, tugging fiercely, making Will moan.

"*Fuck*," he hisses, and drops a hand to his own cock, stroking quickly. Hannibal grips the backs of his thighs, lifts him to that angle that lets his cock drag along Will's prostate, and he gives another frantic, high-pitched snarl, bites Hannibal and floods him with venom as his orgasm overtakes him. Nothing comes out, but his body clamps down viciously around Hannibal's cock, making Hannibal's rhythm stutter as he buries another moan against Will's neck.

Will growls, and grabs at him, urging him on. "Keep going," he commands, earning another helpless little whine from Hannibal's ruined throat. Hannibal licks over his neck, thrusts again, making his entire body jolt, his lingering erection twitching with sensitivity. "Keep going, Hannibal, I swear to God I'll kill you if you stop."

"My knot's coming," Hannibal whispers, ragged and raw. He kisses blindly, until Will turns his head and their mouths can meet.

"Good," Will purrs, smiling. "That's mine too, isn't it?"

Hannibal nods, panting, shining with sweat. He swallows, and rubs his hand up Will's chest. "It'll be more comfortable on your hands and knees," he says.

Will snaps his teeth together around Hannibal's lower lip, and growls. "You're going to look me in the eye when you knot me," he hisses. Hannibal blinks at him, no original color left to his iris now, and he blows out a heavy breath, looking down at where their bodies are connected.

Will snarls, and rolls them again, Hannibal pliant and easily overpowered so he's on his back and Will can settle in his lap once more. He sinks down all the way, groans at the telltale pressure of Hannibal's bulging knot pressing on the outside of his rim, desperate to rut in – too dry, maybe, but Will is determined and he's not going to stop now.

He grips Hannibal's chin and forces their eyes to meet. Opens himself, and feels Hannibal bared and split apart in answer. "Give me your knot," he coaxes, and Hannibal's lashes flutter, his nostrils flare. He grits his teeth and grips Will's hips hard, rutting up until, finally, his knot slips inside, and swells further, locking them together. Will smiles, purring, and pets down his heaving chest. "Good boy," he breathes, stroking himself absently as Hannibal shakes beneath him. He rolls his hips, relishing the tug on his rim – Hannibal is stuck, he's not going anywhere.

"*Will*," he says, the sound like a whimper.

"What do you need?" Will asks, smiling widely. He rolls his hips again, squeezes Hannibal's knot as hard as he can, shivering when he feels that pressure rutting against his prostate, his cock twitching as he keeps touching himself. "Tell me."

Hannibal shakes his head, panting, his fingers flexing and nails dragging helplessly, weakly, along Will's thighs. His stomach tenses, shoulders rolling and curling in, his upper lip twitching back to show his teeth. In his head, the ravine is flooded, the wolf howling in an aching, loud chorus, so close, so close, just needs that little extra push.

He pets up Hannibal's chest, sighing heavily, biting his lower lip as he keeps touching himself, feels that heat flare and coil in his spine, heavy in the base of his skull. He moves at a languid, torturous pace, enjoying the way Hannibal's eyes and the corners of his mouth tighten, his neck flexes as he swallows, his nostrils flare and his jaw clenches. It must be agony, held so long on the precipice of orgasm while Will uses his knot for his own pleasure.

"I could keep you like this forever, couldn't I?" Will purrs, smiling when Hannibal's eyes flash up to his. "Just tight enough to keep your knot swollen, not enough to come." Hannibal snarls at him, chin lifting, and Will laughs.

He leans down, licking over the stain of blood on Hannibal's collarbone, pleased to note now that Hannibal reeks of nothing but himself, and of Will, stained to the bone with their mixed scents. He sucks another mark to Hannibal's chest, just shy of where his heart is still racing, and Hannibal groans, arching up to the pressure of his teeth.

He knows what Hannibal wants. What he needs. He parts his jaws and bites, and closes his eyes, shuddering as he comes dry again, and behind his eyelids the whiteout of Hannibal's own orgasm overtakes him. The heat of his come is startling, makes Will jerk and rut down against his knot – his own body so cool in comparison, he feels every spurt, every thick drop as it coats his insides and settles low in his belly.

He lifts his head, blood and venom dripping from his teeth, and cups Hannibal's lax neck, bringing him up for a kiss as Hannibal moans and gasps and empties himself inside Will, petting up his back and over his flanks, so desperate to touch. He's purring openly, satisfaction and pleasure soaking his thoughts like honey, so utterly sweet Will can't help stealing another taste, eking more blood from the bites he laid to his mate's neck, basking in the warmth of Hannibal's all-consuming adoration.

Hannibal grabs his hair and kisses him, demanding and eager, and Will smiles into each one, petting Hannibal's sweaty hair back from his face, smoothing gentle fingers down his neck, over his shoulders. It feels like Hannibal's orgasm lasts a lifetime, and Will is so full and heavy with his warmth, a seldom-felt exhaustion overtakes him, and he happily rests his forehead on Hannibal's shoulder, breathing in the scents of them clinging to his skin.

When Hannibal's knot goes down, he pulls out, and his cock is followed by a flood of come. Will shivers, smiling, and lets Hannibal roll him to his belly and cover him, knowing it's an instinct for wolves to cover their mates, an overwhelming drive to protect them while they recover. Will is alert enough, and strong enough, he certainly doesn't need protection, but it feels nice, like when Hannibal shields him from the sun, and he likes feeling the rumble of Hannibal's chest pressed to his back, his affectionate nuzzles and warmth against his neck, his shoulders, his thighs.

Withdrawing from a shared thrall takes time, and even when Will feels more like himself, Hannibal's wolf is at his side, sated and sleepy, vibrating with joy. Will turns his head and kisses his mate's red cheek, licks over the bite mark on his jaw, and gives a happy purr in answer.

Hannibal's arms tighten around him, holding him close. "I…" His voice is hoarse, and he clears his throat, swallowing, and tries again; "I'd like you to stay with me, Will."

"Where else would I go?" Will replies, laughing.

Hannibal huffs. "I meant -."

"I know what you meant," Will murmurs. He nuzzles Hannibal's sweaty hair, rolls to his back so he can meet Hannibal's eyes. "My answer remains the same."

Hannibal's eyes shine, dark and wide, and he smiles, and leans down for another kiss, this one more chaste but no less passionate. Hannibal's thoughts are still coming to him, flickering embers instead of that powerful wave, but clear as ever; Hannibal wants him to stay. Where Will goes, he will follow. Whatever Will wants, he will provide. It warms him, to feel just how desperately and wholly Hannibal loves him.

He nuzzles Hannibal's neck, licking over the bite mark, sighing when he feels his own throat already itching, healing over from Hannibal's teeth. He sighs, and once again absently wonders if, one day, his venom in Hannibal will change him enough to be able to leave a permanent mark. He likes that idea more than he'd care to admit.

Hannibal smiles at him, rests their foreheads together, and cups his face. "Are you hungry?" he murmurs.

Will smiles, wide, teasing. "Always."

Hannibal answers him in kind, pets through his hair and tucks a curl behind his ear. "I don't like how we left things with Greyson," he murmurs. "Perhaps we should pay him a visit."

Will's head tilts, intrigue sparking in his mind.

"Whenever feasible, one should always try to eat the rude."

Will laughs, and presses closer, stealing another kiss. "I won't argue," he replies. "But you wanted me to stay, so we're going to stay." Hannibal hums, settling against him. "We have a lot of time to make up for, and I distinctly remember you telling me wolves were an insatiable lot."

Even as he says it, he can feel Hannibal's thoughts flicker with pleasure, his eyes growing dark once again. He smiles. "How could I possibly resist?" he murmurs, and kisses Will deeply, dragging a hand down to wrap around Will's cock. Will shivers, arching into his grip, his body more than eager to respond to the touch of his mate. "I don't think there's ever been a test of stamina between our kinds, of this nature."

Will huffs, and rolls his eyes. "You and your experiments," he murmurs, the last word trailing off into a weak moan as Hannibal thumbs over the slit of his cock, tightens around the head, spreads back down. Hannibal's sweat and come has made him wet, wanting. He digs his nails into Hannibal's shoulder and bares his teeth.

He doesn't hold himself back. Hannibal's blood feeds him enough to keep him hard and wanting, as he works Hannibal through knot after knot, and when Hannibal cannot give anything more, he flips him to his belly and fucks him deep and slow, snarling with pleasure when he makes Hannibal come dry around his cock. The blackout curtains are drawn closed, so he need fear no sunlight, and it's just past dawn when Hannibal finally has to rest, too pale and weak from blood loss and sex to stay awake.

Will smiles, and kisses his forehead when he succumbs to sleep, before he rises, and pulls one of Hannibal's sweaters over his head. His suit pants survived the ordeal of the previous night, and he pulls them on as well, fishing through Hannibal's wardrobe and closet for gloves and a scarf and a hooded windbreaker that will protect most of his skin from the sun.

It's not difficult to find Hannibal's day planner, wherein he keeps the contact information of his friends. He finds Greyson's address, memorizes it, and leaves a note in case Hannibal is awake before he returns.

Hannibal has always taken care of him, and now it's time for Will to return the favor. He's more than happy, this time, to be the one to provide the meat.

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